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Spring 2018
Issue 14

Animal Companions

Animal Companions
An elf's best friend

Codex Maleficarum
Give the baddies some love!

BONUS ARTICLE

Making the God Call
Is there anybody out there?

Extraordinary Holy Symbols
Sacred scions of faith

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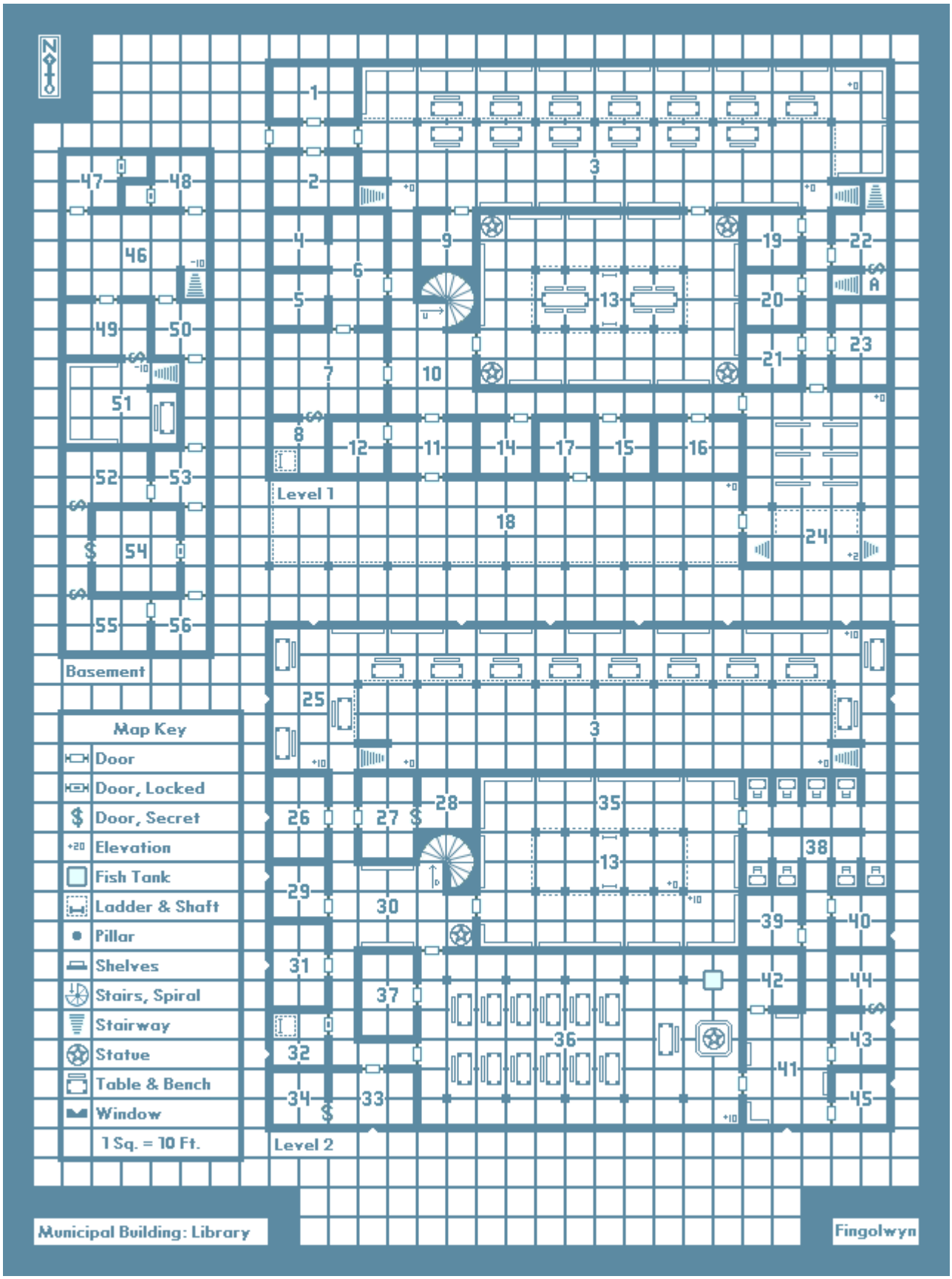
Map 1: Library

by M. W. Poort (AKA Fingolwyn)



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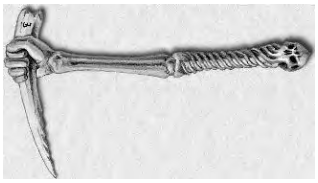

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The theme of this quarter's magazine is

Animal Companions

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Featured Artist

This month's cover artist is Robin Irwin, whose art graces the covers of all episodes of the *Castle Triskelion Mega-Dungeon.*

Robin is a freelance illustrator utilizing both traditional and digital media based in Paducah, Kentucky. Robin is currently posting imagery at www.robinirwinart.blogspot.com. You may also contact Robin at robinirwinart@gmail.com.

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& Musings

by Bryan Fazekas

Thoughts from the chief editor

It seems that our masthead is never the same two issues in a row. There's always change. With this issue the changes are all good. First, we welcome two new additions to the *&PG* editorial team!

Gary Francisco joins us as an editor. Previously he worked with Andrew and me to publish Lenard Lakofka's *L5*, a three volume set (300 pages!) that details the *City of Kroten* on *Lendore Isle*. [Free download at http://dragonsfoot.org/]

Wind Lothamer joins us as the new Art Director, jumping in with both feet to get this issue out the door.

Recently Leon and Handley agreed to switch roles. Leon is now the Lead Editor and Handley is the Submissions Administrator. Our internal role system is fluid, and while we all have specific roles, everyone tends to pitch in on whatever needs doing. However, the Lead Editor and Submissions Administrator roles are rather intensive, so it lightens the load to shift those roles around.

Periodically we receive the offer of financial donations, and folks are surprised that we don't accept donations.

Why?

While I can give a long answer, the short answer is that donations would probably cause more problems than they solve, and honestly – we don't need donations.

How would donations cause problems? The *&PG* is multi-national – at last count our staff and contributors reside in at least seven countries. When money comes into play we must consider the tax laws of all these countries. No money, no tax hassles.

Besides, we don't need donations. I pay for web hosting for my personal sites, which I'd be doing if I wasn't part of the *&PG*. Adding the *and-mag.com* domain to my subscription costs a pittance, not worth the effort to divide the load.

[If anyone can figure out how to get the Microsoft Office 365 subscription for the team, THAT would be handy!]

The best way to contribute to *& Magazine*? Submit articles. Submit art. Give us something to publish. Spread the word about the *& Publishing Group* and our free D&D materials. Keep Old School D&D alive!

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Animal Amalgamations

by Ian Slater

Creating Monsters from Animal Subjects

Sarizor the Wondrous sighed in frustration.

His vats were the finest in the land, his brines and mixtures were precisely measured and set, his components were the most expensive and the purest available. He used healthy animal subjects and had worked uninterrupted through the last several days ...

And nothing, none of his attempts had been successful.

This was his last hope; he had been given ample amounts of gold to create a special hybrid creature for the Duke, something fearsome and formidable; he had spent months tracking down a rare breed of kestrel and a giant anaconda snake breed that was the largest breed he had ever seen.

Six attempts and six failures.

Attempt seven groaned under the weight of Sarizor's expectations. The animals had been in the vat for 6 hours, the werewolf blood was just added, and they were ready for the final step.

Sarizor spoke the words, "Két adja , és az egyik elmegy" and touched the bubbling concoction.

There was a sizzling noise then a frothing of the waters, a dull orange glow emitted from the vat and several seconds later a head emerged from the top. The combined creature was a long constrictor snake with a pair of large wings about halfway down its length. The creature rose into the air with its wings beating in the early evening breeze.

The Duke would be pleased ...

Combining Critters

In AD&D you need to be 7th level to create potions (with the aid of an alchemist), you need to be 7th to scribe scrolls, and 11th to create other magic items.

What level do you need to be to create an owlbear?

The game world is lousy with monsters, some of which could be "natural", but many of which are obviously meant to be the results of experimentation by wizards (the text of the owlbear entry in the *Monster Manual* suggests this explicitly). Add to this the literary precedent: Vance's magicians created life forms (or failed to) as part of their regular activities.

So my proposal is to add "creating magical life forms" to the list of things a magic-user can do by a certain level, like brew potions, scribe scrolls and create magical items.

My preferred level for this is 9th, just below the level cap for elves and high enough that it will not appear in low to mid-level play.

Then there is the mechanism.

Potion manufacture has an optional rule for failure but otherwise it is abstracted in the DMG, making it a fiscal challenge for the most part. Scroll manufacture is costly but has a failure percentage associated with it. Magic item manufacture has a spell associated with it, and potential for failure as well.

Since this is a high-level ability I have chosen to emulate the model for creation of magic items and use a spell as

the mechanism for creation of living things. However, I don't want to step on clerical toes in all of this either; creation of life as a magical power strikes one as the purview of priests. To capture this distinction I decided that rather than create life "ex nihilio" magic-users create it by combining existing living things using magic. This makes them more like Dr. Frankenstein than anything else, the difference being that magic-users can combine *any* two animals rather than assemble the body parts of many into one.

First, the spell:

Cinel's Violent Amalgam

Level:	Magic User 5
Type:	Alteration
Range:	touch
Duration:	permanent
Area of Effect:	two creatures
Casting Time:	12 hours
Components:	V, S, M
Saving Throw:	special

The *Violent Amalgam* takes any two creatures in the range of the spell and combines them into one creature with characteristics of both. The two creatures must be animals, not monsters. For example, an owl and a bear could be combined into an owlbear, but an anhkheg and a bulette could not. It is not necessary to be restricted to existing combinations--new combinations are possible, for example, it is possible to combine say a lizard and a human to make a lizard man, which would be a standard variety lizard man, or to combine a lizard and a dwarf to make a new kind of lizard man.

To cast this spell the magic-user must commission the creation of a special vat made from iron, large enough for the two creatures to be combined. It must be of the finest construction, and will have a base cost no less than 5,000 gp. In such a vat two small sized creatures can be combined, for a small and a medium creature, add 1000gp, for two medium sized creatures, add 2000gp, for a large and a medium or small sized creature, add 3000 gp, for two large sized creatures, add 5000gp to the cost. For anything larger than an elephant, the cost is up to the Dungeon Master to determine.

Each time the vat is used it must save as hard metal versus magical fire or crack and be rendered useless once casting is complete (note that this will not ruin the spell casting). The magic-user must also purchase special herbs, liquids, mixtures and minerals to add to the vat, which will cost anywhere from 300 to 500 gp. The final ingredient is one of two things: the fresh blood (less than 1 week old) of a polymorphed or shape-changing creature, or a **Potion of Polymorph Self**.

The liquids are placed in the vat and a fire is lit under the vat at dawn. The vat is churned regularly and the fire tended, keeping it going all day. By high noon the magic-user adds the two animals to be combined into the vat, they must be freshly slain. All day the MU must check on the vats, make adjustments to the brine and keep the fire going. When sunset arrives the magic-user adds the special blood and chants the words, "Két adja , és az egyik elmegy". Please note:

- If at any time the fire goes out the spell is ruined.
- If the magic-user cannot adjust the mix or is interrupted during the casting the spell is ruined.
- If he fails to do things at the appointed times the spell fails.

Odds of Success

The chance of success with this spell is equal to:

> [20% + Magic-user's level + Magic-user's intelligence - combined HD of the animals].

For example, a 9th level magic-user with a 16 INT combining a 3 HD giant owl and a 4 HD bear would have a:

> 20 + 9 + 16 - [3 + 4] = 38% chance of success.

Odds may never be more than 99%!

Successful creations are permanent, and at the command of the magic-user forever. It is up to the Dungeon Master to decide if these creations can breed, if they can breed only with others of their kind (e.g. a created fox-rabbit can only breed with another created fox-rabbit) or if they can breed with part of their amalgamation (e.g. a fox-rabbit can breed with foxes, or rabbits, or both). They will understand any commands from their creator and those of animal intelligence or greater can be commanded after training by anyone. Creatures will have the alignment of the creator or neutral (1d6: 1-4 is neutral, 5-6 is creator's align). It is up to the Dungeon Master to determine if the offspring of these creations will obey the magic-user or not.

Consequences of Failure

For attempts that fail, roll on the following table:

Failure Table

1d10	Result
1-2	Creation is an unrecognizable unresponsive mass and dies
3-4	Creation has an intelligence of 0 and can only react to stimuli
5-6	Creation lacks senses
7-8	Creation lacks limbs or motive ability
9-10	Creation is completely insane and will (1d4): 1- attack everyone in sight, 2- target the nearest victim and attack, 3- wail and scream constantly 4- attack itself in an attempt to die.

Results of the Combination

Creatures created should have a designated "dominant" and "secondary" animal manifestation, e.g., an owlbear is primarily a bear and secondarily an owl.

Dominant and Secondary Table

1d10	Result
1-6	Magic-User's Choice
7-8	Animal 1
9-10	Animal 2

Roll on each of the following tables to determine the exact statistics for the creature the Amalgam produces:

Armor Class Table

1d10	Armor Class is
1	Two points better than the best AC of the two creatures
2	one point better than the best AC of the two creatures
3-4	the best AC of the two creatures
5-6	the average AC of the two creatures
7-8	the worst AC of the two creatures
9	one point worse than the worst AC of the two creatures
10	two points worse than the worst AC of the two

Movement Rate Table

1d10	Movement Rate is
1-2	6" slower than the slowest move of the two creatures
2	3" slower than the slowest move of the two creatures
3-4	the slowest move of the two creatures
5-6	the average of the two creature's move
7-8	the fastest move of the two creatures
9	3" faster than the highest move of the two creatures
10	6" faster than the highest move of the two creatures

Hit Dice Table

1d10	Hit Dice are
1-2	one HD lower than the lowest HD of the two creatures
3-4	the lowest HD of the two creatures
5-6	the highest HD of the two creatures
7-8	one HD higher than the highest HD of the two creatures
9-10	the combined HD of the two creatures

Number of Attacks Table

1d10	Creature Has
1-3	the lowest number of attacks of the two creatures
4-6	the highest number of attacks of the two creatures
7-8	one attack more than the highest number of attacks of the two creatures
9-10	the combined number of attacks of the two creatures

Damage/Attack Table

1d10	Creature Has
1-2	one die type lower than the lowest damage done by both creatures for all attacks, e.g., 1d6 becomes 1d4.
3-4	the lowest damage of both creatures for all attacks
5-6	the average die of damage from both creatures for all attacks

1d10	Creature Has
7-8	the highest damage of both creatures for all attacks
9-10	one die type higher than the highest damage done by both creatures for all attacks

Intelligence Table

1d10	Creature Has
1-2	one category lower that the lowest INT of the pair
3-4	the lowest INT of the pair
5-6	the average INT of the pair
7-8	highest INT of the pair
9-10	one category higher than the highest INT of the pair

Created creatures will retain the special (non-magical) abilities of the original creatures (such as enhanced senses reducing surprise). Roll on this table to determine which abilities (if any) are retained:

Special Abilities Table

1d10	Creature Has
1-2	none of the special abilities of the two creatures
3-4	one special ability from one of the two creatures
5-6	one special ability from each of the two creatures
7-8	two special abilities from one of the two creatures
9-10	all special abilities of both creatures

On rare occasions the spell produces unexpected side effects. For attempts that succeed, make an additional % roll and on a result of 96%-100% consult the following table:

Extra Abilities Table

1d20	Creature Has
1-2	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level MU spells, usable 1/week.
3-4	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Cleric spells, usable 1/week.
5-6	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Druid spells, usable 1/week.
7-8	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Illusionist spells, usable 1/week.
9-10	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level MU spells, usable 1/day
11-12	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Cleric spells, usable 1/day.
13-14	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Druid spells, usable 1/day.
15-16	1 spell-like power - roll on the 1st level Illusionist spells, usable 1/day.
17-18	2 spell-like powers - roll 1d4: 1- MU, 2-CL, 3-DR, 4- IL, usable 1/week.
19-20	2 spell-like powers - roll 1d4: 1- MU, 2-CL, 3-DR, 4- IL, usable 1/day.

Optional Rules

If desired the DM might allow for an increased chance of success: perhaps the odds seem too low for your taste. One option is to just increase the base odds from 20% to something higher (say 30% or 40%). In addition, a caster might wish to improve their results on the tables.

One option to address these concerns would be to adopt situational modifiers

1. Research

If the caster researches the combination (must have access to a library; if he doesn't have one I suggest a 200gp per week cost to access his master's library, 500-1,000gp per week for library access otherwise), a +5% for every week spent researching, to a maximum of 20%.

2. Learning by Doing

Each unsuccessful attempt to use the spell makes it 1% more likely the next attempt will succeed (learning by

doing), and each successful attempt makes the next attempt 2% more likely. The maximum bonus is 20%.

3. Improved Active Component

Particularly rare shape changer blood, or shape changer blood that is related to one of the creatures being combined, e.g., wererat blood for a combination of a rat and a dog, can bump the odds of success by +5%.

Table Roll Modifiers

When rolling on the tables for individual parameters (e.g. HD of combined creature) the magic-user can impact the results in the following way. For every 5 levels of experience, they can add a +1 to any one table result by doing one of the three things mentioned above (e.g. research, learning by doing, etc.) It is NOT possible to stack +1's on any given table, and doing more than one of the things on the table does not increase the bonus.

Note however that the caster can use the research, the learning by doing or the enhanced components to improve the odds of success, or the table results, but not both.

Example

Eamith the 9th level MU has a 17 INT, he has researched for 2 weeks in his master's library and he attempts to create a combination between a 3 HD boar and a 4 HD alligator. He has failed to create a hybrid 5 times before, and succeeded twice. He has wereboar blood for the attempt.

Cost:

He already has the vat, he rolls 400gp for ingredients, has to pay 400gp (200gp per week) to access his master's library, he pays 8 mercenaries 50gp each (400gp) to protect the area while he works uninterrupted and 80gp more to fuel the fire and pay 8 peasants to maintain it under the vat for the full 12 hours. Total: 1,280gp

Odds of Success:

> [20% + 9% + 17% - (3 + 4) + 10% + 5% + 5% + 4%] = 63%

If you remove the optional rules (no research, no mods for past attempts and no more for special blood) it looks like this:

> Cost: 880gp
>
> Odds: [20% + 9% + 17% - (3% + 4%)] = 39%

If Eamith decided to impact the table results instead of the odds of success, he has done research (+1), he has had some learning by doing (+1) and he has a targeted component (+1). So he could add +1 to three of his table rolls.

So now you have the power, go make yourself a gatorboar!

Riven's Everflaming Torch

A unique magical item obtained by the adventurer and wilderness scout Riven Ravenscar, who was infamous for dual wielding a longsword and torch. He often stated that a torch was more useful than a shield when chasing away critters, stirges, spiders, or for negotiating with trolls. Seemingly a normal torch, this magical item burns with a smokeless flame, never burns out (it burns in gale force winds), will reignite immediately after being doused in water, and ignites or extinguishes with a word. The torch saves as hard metal at +3, and is impervious to fire. If used as a weapon, the torch is +1 to-hit (able to hit creatures only hit by +1 or better weapons), and causes damage as a club, with +2 damage bonus (half the damage is flame, half is bludgeoning damage).

GP value 2,500; XP value 600

Hunter's Leathers

This suit of clothing appears to be nothing more than the well-made, sturdy clothing preferred by hunters, foresters, and woodsmen. However, this magical garb provides the same protection as leather armor (AC 8) with no encumbrance effects. It also blends in, muffles sound and odor, and thus increases the chance of surprising prey by 2 in 6 (to a maximum of 5 in 6) when the wearer is actively stalking prey. It may not be worn with armor or a shield, and has no effect if paired with a **Cloak and Boots of Elvenkind** (the magic cancels each other).

GP value 4,000; XP value 600

by Andrew Hamilton

Animal Companions . . .

by Handley Jackson

Players interact with a fantasy world which includes creatures mundane, magical and everything in between. There are henchmen, hirelings, mercenaries, all NPC's of various types; not to mention an abundance of monsters. They are classified and grouped by their role in the game. Let us consider a new category – or perhaps broaden an implied category – animal companions. Something that lies between an NPC, and a simple mount or pet.

Magic users have the opportunity, given the right spell and a little luck, to summon a familiar. Most often a common creature (cat, bird, toad, etc.) which is "abnormally intelligent and totally faithful" for their kind, "conveys its sensory powers", and "can converse" with the caster. There's a chance the creature is something rare and unusual such as an imp or a pseudo dragon. These common familiars might be considered animal companions, but whether common or rare, the familiar is in a category unto their own, governed by specific rules, and provide powers and abilities to the magic user that distinguishes them from an animal companion. While distinct from the proposed animal companion – it hints at what a player might want from one; something to boost the player's capabilities while adding depth and interest to the character.

Rangers have the opportunity to gather followers upon reaching the 10th level. While these most often take the form of humans or demi-humans, there is a chance that they will include something else – animal, mount or creature. The possibilities range from bear to werebear.

Most the creatures attracted are at least average intelligence, have world-views (alignments other than neutral) and a language of their own. If the player can freely communicate with a being via a shared language or telepathy, and have the "broad ethos of thinking, reasoning creatures" (i.e. alignment) that they can speak to, they are distinct from creatures in the animal world – and have entered in the realm of "personhood". I consider these traits to have differentiated them from the animals and beasts of the fantasy world and place them into the broad category of NPC.

Regardless of intelligence or alignment, all of the creatures listed are considered followers. Someone who supports and is guided by another. This provides animal followers (black or brown bear, and hippogriff) with a greater status than mount or pet, while leaving the details of the relationship ambiguous. These animal followers of the ranger then begin to define the term animal companion.

Once a paladin has reached the 4th level they have the opportunity to call a warhorse, whose location will be revealed to them by their deity. In all but intelligence and HP/HD, it is described as a heavy warhorse. Presumably it is still a horse, with their typical behavior. Further description of this special mount in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* (*DMG)* indicates that "it knows its role and relationship" and "will faithfully serve", and refers to an "immutable enmity" should the paladin lose his status. This all speaks to a special bond between them. This more explicit description of the relationship makes this best example of an animal companion presented in the official rules – though provided in a special manner and only available to paladins.

Candidates

Accepting that a few of the ranger's potential followers and the paladin's warhorse are existing examples of

animal companions in the game, what do they have in common which would allow us to create a list of candidates?

They're all beasts or animals of some type, and not considered people. Defining the difference between man or "personhood" and beast in a fantasy world is no easy matter. Alignment and intelligence are the two best game mechanics available to try and form an objective opinion.

All of the natural creatures presented in the *Monster Manual (MM)*, *Fiend Folio (FF)*, and *Monster Manual II (MMII)* have a neutral alignment. I don't think this indicates that they have a particular world-view as indicated by other alignments, but rather that they lack one, and are creatures of nature. Neutral alignment is then the first criteria. [Note: for creatures of higher intelligence, Neutral alignment is an ethos; the alignment has two contradictory meanings.]

Most natural creatures have either non-, animal-, or semi-intelligence with a few being of low intelligence. Primates (apes, baboons) presented in the *MM* have been classified as having low-intelligence, which overlaps with the range of humans and demi-humans. This blurs the line between man and beast, requiring some further criteria for these creatures. The only available game mechanic available to break the tie is language. None of the natural creatures are presented as having a language understood by humans or demi-humans – or in the vernacular of the *MM*, "a language of their own". This in combination with low intelligence might then help define the line between man and beast.

The models for the animal companion are at least semi-intelligent, and I deem this the minimum necessary to rise above the position of mount or pet and form the bond of animal companion (more on this later). Semi- to low intelligence is then the second criteria, with the no noted language skills being the third. This generally eliminates reptiles, amphibians, and most birds.

Alignment and intelligence give us some idea of where the line between man and beast lies – but what about the line between animal and monster? The existing examples of animal companions not all natural (or if you prefer real) creatures so this doesn't seem to be useful in defining the animal companion. In a fantasy world what we perceive as magical or mythical creatures are not precluded from being natural. If you live in a world of faerie, magic, and mystical creatures, many creatures we would classify as fantastic or a monster would be relatively normal – or natural.

The definition of monster or animal for spells (*Animal Friendship*, *Summon Monster*, etc.) need not restrict our definition of the animal companion, and conversely should not affect the function of spells.

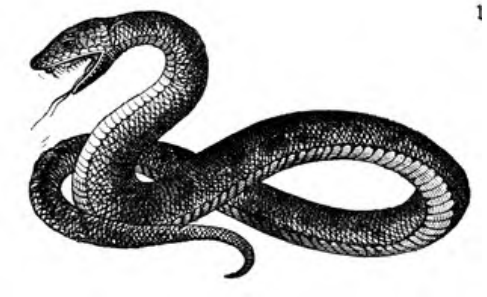
Natural creatures exist on the Prime Material Plane, and do not draw power or energy – i.e. magic – from outside the natural world. Special abilities then must be determined to be either natural (biological) or magical. Gaze weapons are clearly magical. I can't think of a plausible biological explanation. Breath weapons must be determined to either be biological or magical effects. I prefer my fantasy world to be as natural as possible, so they're biological; you may prefer magical. Provided the creature has wings, the ability to fly need not be magical, making griffons, hippogriffs, wyverns and the like natural creatures.

Finally, there are a number of creatures that are animated plants. While not appearing to be eligible for personhood, nor being in magical in nature, these are still not animals.

This leaves us with a few criteria for helping to determine if a creature might belong in the category of animal companion.

- A neutral alignment.
- An intelligence of 2-7 (semi – low).
- Does not possess a language understood by humans/demi-humans.
- Normally exists on the Prime Material Plane, does not possess magical abilities
- Are not animated plants.

So having developed criteria for what might be considered an animal companion, what does that leave us with as a list of potential candidates? The range of creatures available in the various monster tomes that meets these criteria is pretty broad. Some will be more useful than others; some are just plain weird (to my mind) – and are categorized as such. I'm sure some only belong in the classifications provided in the most general sense. Others won't be useful in your campaign, and honestly not are practical. I've tried to be as generous with the list as possible to promote thought and inspiration.



Primate

- ape, gorilla [MM]
- ape, carnivorous [MM]
- baboon [MM]
- taer [MM2]
- snyad (pestie) [FF]

Canine

- cooshee [MM2]
- dog, wild [MM]
- dog, war (guard)* [MM]
- jackal [MM]
- wolf [MM]
- wolf, dire (N/E) [MM]

Feline

- jaguar [MM]
- leopard [MM]
- lion [MM]
- mountain lion [MM]
- spotted lion [MM]
- tiger [MM]
- elfin cat [MM2]

Mustelid

- badger [MM]
- otter, giant [MM]
- weasel, giant
- wolverine (N/E) [MM]
- wolverine, giant (N/E) [MM]

Rodent/Mammal

- boar, wild [MM]
- minimal [MM2]
- rat, giant (N/E) [MM2]
- squirrel, giant black (N/E) [MM2]
- witherstench [FF]

Elephantine

- elephant* [MM]
- mammoth [MM]
- mastodon [MM]
- oliphant [MM2]

Ursine

- owlbear * [MM]
- bear, black [MM]
- bear, brown [MM]
- bear, cave [MM]
- bear, polar [MM2]
- gorilla bear [FF]

Avian / Flying

- blood hawk, [FF]
- clubneck, [FF]
- dragonnel, [MM2] (N/E)
- firedrake, [FF]
- griffon* [MM]
- hippogriff* [MM]
- raven, huge, [MM2] (N/E)
- raven, giant (N/E) [MM2]
- web bird, [MM2]
- wyvern (N/E) [MM]
- mobat (N/E) [MM2]

Bovine/Equine

- buffalo [MM]
- bull* [MM]
- camel [MM]
- cattle, wild* [MM]
- goat, giant [MM]
- mule* [MM]

Insectoid

- bee, giant [FF]
- dragonfly, giant [MM2]
- firefriend [MM2] (N/G)
- hornet, giant [FF]
- termite, soldier [MM2]

Aquatic

- afanc [MM2]
- sea horse [MM]
- sea lion [MM]
- spider, giant marine [MM2]
- spider, giant water [MM]
- whale [MM]

Weird/Strange

- baluchitherium [MM]
- bowler [MM2]
- dustdigger [MM2]
- executioner's hood [MM2]
- gibbering mouther [MM2]
- hydra [MM]
- squealer [MM2]
- thessalhydra [MM2]
- thunder herder [MM2]

(N/E) or (N/G) - indicates the creature has evil/good tendencies which could eliminate them from consideration.

* – indicates that the creature may be for sale, though perhaps only in large markets, and appropriate climates.

This list seems to missing something. Where is the horse? After all, the paladin's warhorse was part of the basis for our definition, albeit an exceptional specimen. The *MM* indicates that a horse only has an animal intelligence (i.e. equivalent to 1), making the paladin's warhorse a true extreme of their species. I'd suggest that less extreme specimens exist (i.e. merely semi-intelligent), and should be made available as an animal companion – though not necessarily without effort. Cheetahs were also classified as animal intelligence, unlike similar felines. Obviously, exceptions can be made, and the list is not intended to be definitive, but rather inspirational.

The following are noted in the *MM* to be for sale in large markets: giant beaver, blink dog, dragon (subdued of course), giant eagle, giant owl, and pegasus. Each possesses an average or greater intelligence, and some a

language of their own. While these creatures may fill the role of an animal companion, I believe they are something more, and have more in common with henchmen or perhaps even slaves than animal companions.

Nature of the Relationship

First, remember that this is a companion. A relationship must exist, and hence must be formed either through training and/or shared experience. Owning a pack of dogs, which are viewed as useful but expendable, does not make them animal companions. Gaining an animal companion should not be as simple as going down to the marketplace and turning over a few coins. This may be a starting point – and not the only potential starting point – but should not be the end. Like the ranger's followers and the paladin's warhorse an extraordinary effort or accomplishment should be required.

The animal embodies the true meaning of a follower – they are supported and guided by another. As long as they are operating outside of their normal environment they will be dependent upon the player. They will be in a society and world that is not their own, with varying abilities to relate to it. They need the guidance the player provides to be integrated with and operate in their surroundings without disruption. This makes the relationship one of unequal partners – or perhaps family – and puts the player in the lead role. Which is not to say that the animal companion is the property or slave of the player. It is still a partnership – there is give and take. How close to an equal partnership exists will depend upon the abilities of the animal companion.

As noted, some of the potential companions are on the grey area that lies between man and beast. While lacking a language of their own it is still possible that the player and animal companion may form a rudimentary form of communication that goes beyond performing tricks or commands. Gnomes seem to have an advantage in this arena as they have the ability to communicate with burrowing mammals. I don't take this to mean that they share a common language, rather through familiarity with the species that gnomes are able to impart their intentions, express themselves, and perhaps make simple requests.

The use of magic such as *Speak with Animals, Animal Friendship, ESP,* are obvious tools in the formation of this relationship.

Acquisition

So then, how does one acquire an animal companion? There are three sources for animal companions, wild adult creatures, their young (or eggs), and domesticated creatures.

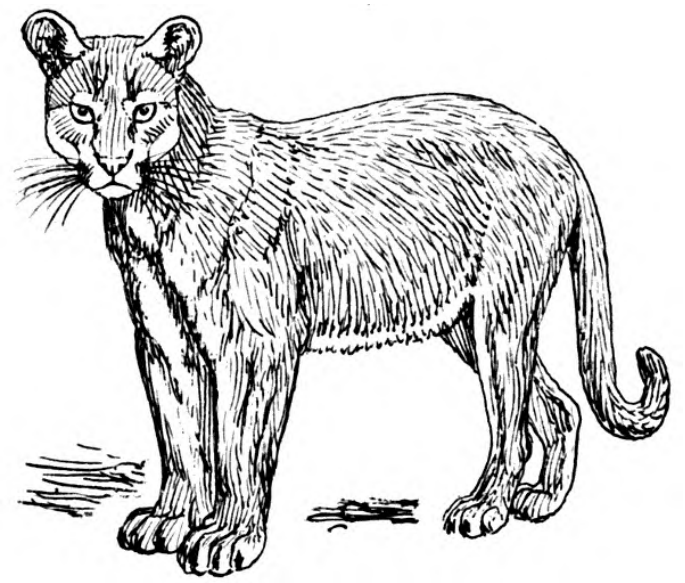
In some cases, it may be possible to befriend or otherwise entice a full-grown creature into becoming an animal companion. Perhaps an abundance of food, or safety from predators might entice an animal to follow the player/party, providing the opportunity to become an animal companion. A shared hardship or enforced confinement may serve as the catalyst for the bond. Sharing a cave for a winter would seem to encourage some form of understanding. The use of *Speak with Animals* may greatly reduce how much effort is required to entice an animal – though not all potential companions meet the definition of animals for spell purposes. The details of this process will depend upon the circumstances. I view this process depending more upon serendipity than a player's plan and effort. The advantages of a relationship with a strange creature (person) is likely a hard sell to an adult creature, and the use of *Animal Friendship* may be the only sure means of obtaining an adult animal companion – though obviously limited to druids. Note that it may not be entirely under the control of the party. An animal may decide that following the party may be to their benefit, and perhaps the party's annoyance.

Young creatures, generally being impressionable and not as "set in their ways" as adults, provide a means of acquiring a companion through training. This puts players in the position of finding an appropriate lair or nest, and capturing or otherwise obtaining suitable young. The frequency that these animals occur as listed should not be overlooked. A dragonnel (very rare) should not be easy to acquire. The use of *Locate Animals*, and *Animal/Monster Summoning* spells will generally find or summon full grown specimens which may or may not be suitable or willing companions. It is however a relatively simple means to bring the players into contact with the appropriate species on their own terms. Surely it is better than entering the lion's den uninvited. If a suitable impression can be made (perhaps with the use of *Speak with Animals* or similar magic) adult creatures may be willing to provide locations of young or in extreme cases be willing to let their young enter into fosterage with the player-character.

A majority of the non-domestic creatures listed have no by-the-book provision for frequency of young in the wild, leaving how and when young are encountered up

to the DM. This may make finding suitable young of some of the more exotic creatures a difficult if not impossible task. Are firedrakes only hatched in the caldera of Mount Doom, and gain sustenance from its environs until mature? Certainly, the details will be up to DM discretion, and should be used as the source of at least an adventure or two.

Domestic animals will be available for purchase, while the majority of candidates listed are not domesticated and if available for purchase will be the young which are suitable for training. Being available does not mean that they are available locally. Extensive travel may be required. The breeder/owner may be particularly selective about to whom they sell their animals. Others may be given as a gift after an appropriate quest or service to a group that has already domesticated the species. Despite these obstacles, this is still likely to be the easiest path.



Training

If an animal companion is not acquired by a shared experience, hardship or similar means, the relationship can be formed via training. Even if the bond has already been formed, the relationship can benefit from training. Certainly, it would be the basis for a better understanding and interaction between the animal companion and player. Training will improve the communication between player and animal, and impart a level of coordination that won't exist without it. In the case of non-domestic young the bond can be formed while the creature is domesticated and trained.

The *DMG* (pg 50) provides some guidance specific to the training of griffons, which should serve as a good model for our animal companion. In summary, griffons are fiercely loyal to a single rider. Training and exercise must be carried out by the rider while the griffon is a fledgling for a period of at least 4 months. Once the mount begins to fly, intensive training requiring daily training by the rider for a period of 4 months. If this training schedule is broken for more than 2 days, all progress is lost.

Non-domestic creatures would seem to require at least an 8 month commitment from the player-character. Since domestication and training generally occurs while the animal grows to a maturity, this time may be longer still depending upon the nature (and size) of the animal. Perhaps short periods where training is provided by someone other than the owner is possible in such extended durations. Again using griffon training as a model, it would seem to follow that domestication of a young wild animal will tend to produce animals be loyal to only their trainer, while it is possible to transfer the loyalty of domestic species. Ultimately these are all questions that must be addressed by the DM.

Having completed this period of training and domestication a sufficient set of shared experiences exist to form the bond of animal companion. A friendship and trust has been formed, as well as expectations both on the part of the player and the companion. A certain level of communication, coordination can be achieved with training that is not feasible without it.

Fully trained adult animals that have reached their maximum potential presumably have done so having formed an animal companion relationship with their trainer. If an animal companion is acquired by means other than domestication and training by the owner, they must now transfer their loyalty to a new owner. Assuming that more intelligent creatures will more readily understand commands and training it should take less time to transfer loyalty for more intelligent creatures. I would suggest a period of 1d6+1 weeks inversely proportional to intelligence plus an additional 1d4 weeks. For example, a trained creature with an intelligence of 7 might take a base 2 weeks plus 1d4 weeks to acclimate, while one with an intelligence of 2 may take 7 weeks plus an additional 1d4 weeks. During this time the animal may be more subject to panic, and commands may not be always understood or followed.

Abuse of this relationship or failure to treat them properly should lead to ignored commands, and at extremes attempts to flee or leave the owner. As noted previously this is partnership that borders on familial bonds. This places a certain burden upon the player as well as the animal.

Speak with Animals can be used to ease this transition and bring the animal to his full potential more quickly. It should not, however, decrease the time required to domesticate an animal, as the majority of this time requirement is for the animal to mature. It may serve to allow the owner to be away for short periods while the trainings critical.

Animal Friendship is obviously a short-cut to the entire process outlined above, though many of the creatures listed may not be considered animals for the purposes of the spell. The use of *Animal Friendship* on an animal that has already been trained should allow full use of those skills with virtually no additional training and acclimatization.

Capabilities

So, having embarked on a campaign to acquire a companion, what does a player do with one? Aside from providing an extra set of attack sequences to the party's arsenal what can they be taught? The answer of course, depends.

Without the ability to speak and understand their animal companion, this must come down to commands, whether gestures or the spoken word. In the vernacular of *Animal Friendship* this equates to tricks. *Animal Friendship* can be used to form a particular bond with an animal, and by so doing enables the druid to teach the animal up to 3 tricks per point of intelligence (3d4 tricks), and requiring 1 week of training per trick. This requires no special communication; simply the animals desire to be "friends", and of course, magic. I would suggest that in the case of semi-intelligent creatures having been domesticated and receiving normal training over the course of 8 or more months should reach near parity with the results *Animal Friendship.* Perhaps animals with an intelligence of 4 are able to learn 11 commands, while those of lower intelligences might learn 7, or 9 for an intelligence of 2, and 3 respectively. Creatures with a low intelligence (5-7 in game terms) should capable of significantly more, perhaps 16, 20, 24 or more.

This then would determine bounds of what they could be trained to perform, and asked to execute upon command. The use of *Speak with Animals* may enable more complex commands, new commands, or a short series of commands to be carried out on temporary basis.

Commands must be non-complex and consist of a single set of actions. Multiple steps or sequences must be broken down into a series of commands which are given one at a time. For game purposes, some commands are simple enough that related commands (sit/down) should be considered a single command for training purposes. The following provides some options.

General Commands

- Speak / Silence – generally make whatever noise/howl is appropriate, or don't.
- Sit / Down / Stand – Move as indicated, and await the next command.
- Heel – Follow at the owners left side, and slightly behind them.
- Lead – Stay ahead of the owner while moving.
- Run-out / Stop – Run away from the owner until stopped.
- Come/Recall – Return to the owner and sit.
- Crawl – Future movement instructions will be carried out on the belly.
- Forward / Back – move away from or toward the owner.
- Left/Right – move to the owners right/left as indicated.

Combat Commands

- Attack (general) – attack the creature(s) indicated with the animal's normal attack routine.
- Attack (specific) – attack with any special attack they may have (Breath weapon, musk, maintain bite/hold, etc.).
- Guard/Defend – attack any creature that threatens/attacks the recipient – be it person or object.
- Threaten – generally make aggressive gestures toward a person/creature without attacking.
- Patrol – walk move on indicated route, and respond as trained.
- Release – stop attacking.

Search Commands

- Warn/Alert – indicate (bark, sit, etc.) on the presence of a trained object/condition
- Search (general) – move about and search for the trained object/condition.
- Search (specific) – search a specific location for the trained object/condition.

The list is not all inclusive but provides a set of typical commands that the animal companion should be capable of. It generally ignores general correction / reward commands, which are the basis of any training.

The list of movement commands is the longest – rightly so. The ability to control the animal's movements and take the animal "off-lead" is critical. Anyone who has ever walked a large dog with a mind of their own knows what I'm talking about. In game terms this provides the ability to keep the animal close while trying to sneak up on a target, position them before another command is given, and generally ensure they are where they need to be, when they need to be there. Players may be tempted to forgo these types of commands in favor of more attractive attack and search commands, but the resulting lack of control should result.

Combat commands are self-explanatory. Search commands deserve special mention.

Not all animals will be suited for performing searches, and searching will be specific to their training. Just like a narcotics dog is not a tracking dog, while both depend upon scent, what they do with it are two different things. An animal could be trained to provide a warning or alert signal (growling, sitting, etc.) when it detects a specific noise or scent. A general search is to go out and find the object, scent, condition trained for. For example, a creature could be trained to use their sense of smell to detect a class of poison, and could then search a room for it, and provide the alert signal when found. A specific search is closer to the stereotypical bloodhound search. Given a sample of the scent they would then attempt to follow it to the strongest available source.

An animal's sense of smell and hearing is generally better than most humanoids. The DMG (page 60) refers to the potential for unintelligent creatures with a keen sense of smell to detect invisible creatures. Unfortunately, it then fails to provide adequate guidance (in my opinion) for a useful game mechanic based on the table provided. A scent hound (2HD) with a particularly keen sense of smell would be equivalent to an intelligence of 17+. The table provided in the DMG would indicate that there would be no chance of detecting an invisible creature, as they have less than 7 HD. By no means should this be an automatic success – but there should be some chance, and the rules would seem to need some adjustment.

Having identified some commands, aside from the addition of another set of attack routines how then could they be used to the benefit of the party? The addition of a scent hound to the ranger's tracking skills seems an obvious plus. Where one loses the trail, perhaps the other can find it. Perhaps it's as simple as providing someone other than a party member to sleep on the floor below the window at that seedy inn their forced to stay at. Common or mundane animals may be generally ignored in some areas. If a means of verbal communication (i.e. *Speak with Animals* or the equivalent) they could be placed to gather intelligence. Perhaps they can provide a timely distraction. Large animals can be intimidating, and be used to the players benefit in negotiations or interrogations.

The options are only limited by the imagination of the players.

Liabilities

First and foremost, keep in mind what they are; animals. They are not fearless, mindless automatons, nor are they trusted henchmen. Rather they are something in between. They do not reason as the player does. What they may perceive as a threat – may not be, and what they don't could be. They tend to be more instinctual, and less rational. Their interest and focus can only be maintained for so long. An animal left unsupervised will eventually lose interest in or forget their current command. Left long enough they are like to seek "entertainment" of their own. The extent that these generalizations are true will depend upon the nature of the animal companion.

They may panic and flee in the face of some creatures; they may refuse to attack others. Your war dog is not likely to bite into that black pudding or fire elemental. If they can't recognize the opponent as another animal / humanoid, they may be reluctant to, or refuse to, attack. Generally, the more exotic the opponent – the less likely they are to engage. If they recognize the creature as an overpowering they may chooses to flee or evade rather than engage.

The animal's base nature will shape their actions and "personality". Carnivores will generally be more aggressive than herbivores. A few have a taste for human flesh that could cause issues. Dogs are generally seen as loyal, willing to please animals – while cats are viewed as aloof and independent. The way the animal is perceived may affect encounter reaction in some cases. Who really wants to get close to a hydra, no matter how friendly they look?

There are some places they don't *want* to go, others they *won't* go, places they will be nigh unto useless, as well as places they will not be welcome. Your war elephant is not going into that cave. Flying creatures are not generally going to be helpful indoors and underground. The inn

will not stable your griffon next to its normal occupants – which are viewed as food by the griffon.

Your animal companion may not be welcome everywhere you are. Your grizzly bear may not be welcome in most (any?) taverns. Your pack of dogs may not be welcome in the king's court. There are, and should be, reasonable limitations on where your animal companion will be welcome.

The more exotic the animal companion, the more attention will be garnered. The animal companion may become the calling card by which the party is easily recognized and known. Not all attention is good attention, particularly if one is trying lay low.

While in their natural element animals tend to fend for themselves, but once taken under the wing of an owner, upkeep costs will be incurred. It may be fairly simple, and as low as a few coppers per day or extremely complicated and hundreds of gold per month. Special quarters, grooms or handlers may be required to feed and maintain the animal in peak condition.

The type of animal companion relative to the level of the players may be a challenge. At low levels the animal may be too powerful and cause balance issues. Experience awarded to the party could be affected. At high levels survivability of war dogs and similar low HD animals will be an issue. One 3rd level spell could spell certain doom for the party's pack of hounds.

As with most things in life, everything comes at a cost. It is up to the players to use their imagination and grasp for every benefit they can gain, and the DM's to keep things in balance.

All this being said – plusses and minuses – the addition of an animal companion has the ability to add interest to the campaign. So, go tell your DM you want a carnivorous ape as a companion, and figure out how to make it happen.

'Waspray' Bottle

A creation of the spite-witch Frau Grune, this vintage perfume sprayer consists of a transparent crystal globe with 1' long black piping and 'balloon' hand pump. The liquid within the globe is bright yellow streaked throughout with black. When the waspray is aimed at oneself or another and pumped, a fine mist shoots out (5' range) and instantaneously transmogrifies into a swarm of biting wasps. The victim suffers 1d3 hp damage per round and cannot perform any action except trying to fend off the biting insects unless a successful saving throw versus Spells is made. The wasps remain for 1d8 rounds before dissipating.

The perfume bottle contains 2d4+2 uses before emptying.

GP value 5,000; XP value 1,000

Torvold's Miraculous Shield

This medium sized wooden round shield has an iron boss in the center and is patterned in white with the figures of Norse warriors around the circumference. Once per day when the command word "Aesir!" is shouted, the shield conjures a shield wall around the bearer such that he/she and all within a 10' radius hemisphere (extending laterally and behind the shield bearer) are 75% covered, as per cover rules DMG p.64. The shield wall remains in place for 1 turn before disappearing.

It is a **Shield +1** in all other respects.

GP value 7,500; XP value 1,000

Jamyang's Zafu

The orange meditation cushion of the great mage priest Jamyang confers its magical properties to any good aligned cleric who meditates upon it. All clerical spells will be regained at the rate of one spell level per round (as opposed to the usual 15 rounds per spell level) until a maximum of 100 total spell levels have been regained, whereupon the cushions power becomes dormant until one full day has passed.

GP value 10,000; XP value 1,000

by Dan Rasaiah

Dogs of the Lakelands

by Andrew Hamilton

In the real world, dogs have played an important role in many cultures. They have been work animals, and their abilities have been used to aid hunters or to guard the domesticated flocks. Their alertness and loyalty have been used to train dogs as guardians and companions. Their hardiness has allowed dogs to be used as beasts of burden in the Arctic. Sometimes dogs have been used for war, or to detect threats, and they have even been used as food. Mostly though, dogs are loyal companions that serve to guard their home and family.

In a fantasy realm, a dangerous world where monsters and raiders seem to lurk over each hill, the importance of guard animals cannot be understated. While wizards, priests and nobles will have unusual or magical creatures, commoners will rely on "normal" animals that are easy to raise and care for. Similarly, just as in the real world, humans and other dog-loving races and societies would engage in selective breeding programs to create specialized breeds.

One should not underestimate the effectiveness of a selective breeding program that could result from the efforts of druids and sages. Nor should the efforts of long lived races (like dwarves and elves) to oversee breeding programs be downplayed. Added to the ability to use magic (speak with animals and animal friendship are both highly effective and low level spells), it is quite conceivable (IMO) that specialized breeds with natural abilities bordering on magical would be common.

Author's Note *– I would recommend reading "Man's Best Friend" by Clayton R. Beal in Dragon Magazine #237, as well as "Twelve Ways To Classify Man's Best Friend" by Stephen Inniss in Dragon Magazine #103. This first article presents a system that will help individualize dogs and describes a mechanism for training dogs, resulting in a canine companion that will be more than just an extra attack. The second has a system for describing the game mechanics of various types of dogs. Both articles might help inspire DMs and Players.*

In the Lakelands there are five dominant races: humans, mountain dwarves, halflings, elves, and the half-elves (as a result of centuries of close ties between humanity and the Elven Courts, the half-elven population is apparently large enough to be self-sustaining, but they have not established a breed of their own, although many joke that they are partial to the Lakeland Mutt).

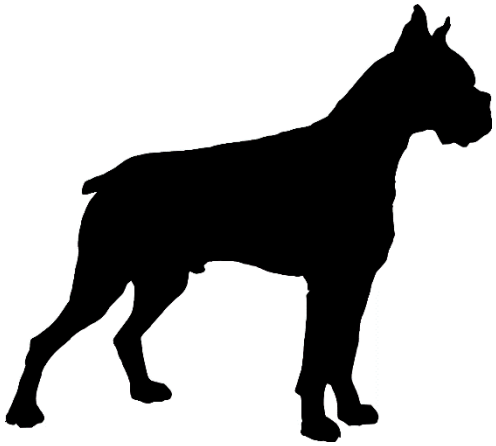
Durwin Mastiff (Dwarf Clans)

While most people do not associate the tunnel-dwelling dwarves with dogs, the truth is that the dwarves of the Lakelands have long had their trusty canine companion, the Durwin Mastiff. Dwarves find much to admire about dogs, in particular their loyalty.

The origin of the Durwin Mastiff breed is attributed to Clan Durwin of the Winterfall Mountains. Not truly a mastiff, the Durwin is a short (24" at the shoulder and 40" long tip of the nose to the rump--the dwarves typically dock the Mastiff's tail) and stocky breed (weighing 100 to 140 lbs), with a body reminiscent of a bulldog but with a longer muzzle and thicker water-repellant coat (it can be cold and damp underground). They are a dirty grey color, perfect for blending in with rock walls in the dark.

The Durwin is strong and tough, but a poor tracker and slow runner. They have excellent night vision (but not infravision) and hearing. Unfortunately, they have sensitive eyes, suffering -1 to hit in daylight.

They are surprised only 1 in 6, and being raised to be comfortable in darkness allows them to detect invisible creatures 55% of the time (as if they have >15 HD and 12 & Intelligence).



Like the dwarves themselves, the Durwin's iron constitution gives it a saving throw bonus against poisons and magical effects. The Durwin Mastiff saves at +4 against these effects.

Most Durwin Mastiffs are trained to bite and hold a foe, and their dwarf masters have trained to take advantage

of this combat technique and follow up, striking the disabled foe.

In game mechanic terms, a Durwin that hits on a d20 roll 4 or greater than the required target holds the target and shakes. This causes bite damage automatically each subsequent round, and provides a dwarf companion experienced in this form of combat a +4 bonus to strike at the foe being held by the Durwin Mastiff (an unskilled combatant only gains a +2 bonus to strike the held victim). The creature held by the Durwin also suffers a -2 penalty to hit. The Durwin can be removed with a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll (with double the normal chance of success), or by killing it.

The dwarves love their Durwins, and while they expect to take their canine companions into battle with them, some dwarves have crafted armor to protect their allies & companions. This typically takes the form of a skull cap with a segmented "cape" that protects the neck and back (providing the Durwin Mastiff with an AC of 4). There are a few suits of complete "canine barding", but this tends to be too heavy to be of real use: while it reduces the Durwin's AC to 2, it reduces their movement to 6" and causes a -1 penalty to hit.

Durwin Mastiff AC 6 (4), MV 9", HD 2+4, Atts 1, Dmg 1d6+1, SA bite & hold, SD saving throw bonus, surprised 1 in 6, SW sensitive to light, MR standard, Int Semi, AL N, Size M, XPV 35 + 3 xp/hp + 2 SA

Red Whippet (Elven Courts)

The Wood Elves that reside in the Elven Courts have cooshee and elfin cats as companions and allies, and develop strong bonds with these creatures that seem to span generations (cooshee pups in particular are seemingly born pre-bonded with their elven allies). The wood elves have never raised other breeds of dogs, and they have attempted to keep the cooshee bloodline true.

While the Grey Elves disdain the use of "animals", and feel that forming a bond with something with a life less than two decades long is foolish, the High Elves of the Elven Court take a middle road, and many love their dogs as fiercely as the humans of the Lakelands. Some of the High Elves have had canine companions that they can trace back for scores of generations (even hundreds of generations in some cases), and they have elaborate records of the lineage and heritage of their canine families.

Over the last several centuries (i.e. quite recently), the High Elves have developed a breed that is intelligent, crafty, and surprisingly playful. The Red Whippet has a coat and muzzle not unlike that of a fox, but with a body reminiscent of a boxer. It is fast, a sight hunter, but not a tracker. They are fleet and quick striking (+1 to hit), but not especially tough or durable (1+1 HD). High-strung and alert (gaining +1 initiative & reaction rolls, and only surprised 1 in 6), they are used to chase prey or carry messages (either in a tube attached to a collar, or in a special pouch carried in the mouth).

Since the dogs are highly communicative via barking and howling, some elves can learn the language of the Red Whippet (essentially a permanent *Speak with Animals* effect which only works with the Red Whippet). The Red Whippet breed is extremely intelligent (bordering on Low intelligence, and another millennium of breeding is likely to see these creatures approach average intelligence). While the Red Whippet is unable to communicate complex ideas, they can effectively scout, have a sense of numbers up to about 10, can describe armor & weapons, prey types, some monsters and races, etc.). Learning to communicate with Red Whippets in this manner requires a language slot (necessitating the elf to have either a high Intelligence score or giving up one of their "free" languages). Learning to speak Red Whippet takes as only half as long as any other language (due to the limited range of language, as whippets would never talk about math, poetry, philosophy, etc. but are great conversationalists when it comes to rabbits, squirrels, etc.).

Red Whippet AC 6, MV 18", HD 1+1, Atts 1, Dmg 1d4, SA +1 initiative, +1 strike, SD surprised 1 in 6, MR standard, Size S, Int Semi (high end of the range); XPV 20 + 2xp/hp + 2 SA

Humans

Humans are the most versatile (and inconsistent) of the Lakeland races, and they follow many professions, often traveling far and wide. This has led to the genesis of several canine breeds (and the importation of a few others from other areas, like the Northern Wulf, a dog similar to a massive husky). Humans are also willing to press other creatures into duty as guard animals (mules, donkey and geese being some favorites).

Dogs are their favorite guard and companion animals however, so much so that dogs play a central role in many stories, myths and legends. In fact, among many of the humans of the Lakelands, there are legends of an entity or creature (or even a Power) known as "Dog".

Dog is a local superstition. [While the Lakelands abound with tales of Dog, the Northern Baronies and Kingdoms of man have no such tales, although the Western Clansmen that visit the Lakelands love the tales, and have some of their own.] Dog appears to be a collage of local tall tales and legends where a mysterious dog arrived to help fight off danger, lead a child to safety, or warn people of danger. Some of these tales have a large dog arriving to help other dogs fight off a threat, often defeating a magical monster or other creature well beyond the capability of a normal canine or person to defeat. This has led to a myth or legend that a powerful spirit, possibly even the God of Dogs, roams the Lakelands. Many humans will leave out offerings to "Dog", treating the spirit like a deity. Skeptics think that the legend is nothing more than tall tales, and perhaps some of the stories are based on a shape-changed druid protecting his community or worshippers, or the timely intervention of a ranger or huntsman with a pack of hunting hounds. When asked, the druids and rangers tend to shrug and share their opinion that "Who can really say, but it certainly can't hurt to leave offerings to Dog".

Whiterun Hound

A scent hound and excellent tracker, the Whiterun Hound is reminiscent of a musclebound Basset Hound, with slightly longer legs (to better keep their belly off the forest floor). The Whiterun Hound is heavy and slow, but has an impressive endurance (Constitution equivalent to 15 to 17) and can track for extended periods of time (up to 12 hours without rest, but they then require 8 hours of rest to recover). The Whiterun Hound has very sensitive smell and hearing (able to detect invisible creatures 35% of the time), and track by smell at 95% base (better than a ranger's tracking skill).

Lousy fighters, they are skittish (-10% morale) and only fight if attacked and unable to flee (-10% to morale in combat, but in other non-combat situations such as going into scary places they are loyal with a +10% morale & loyalty bonus). Their skittishness is associated with a heightened sense of awareness, and Whiterun Hounds are only surprised 1 in 12. The rangers of the Lakelands tend to have one Hound, with a few Mutts or Terriers, to make up a hunting pack. They value the abilities of the Hound, and are wise enough to have a mix of dogs.

Whiterun Hound AC 7, MV 12", HD 1+1, Atts 1, Dmg 1d3, SA none, SD surprised 1 in 6, MR standard, INt Semi, AL Neutral, Size S, XPV 28+ 2 xp/hp

Davendown Shepherds

Many of the Lakelanders joke about shepherds and their dogs, and there are many variations of the joke that shepherds are closer to their dogs than their wives. There is some truth to this, as a shepherd and his working dogs rely on each other to safeguard their lives (and the working dogs help safeguard the well-being of the shepherd's family).

Herdsmen require alert dogs (surprised only 1 in 6) that can withstand foul weather, and the Davendown Shepherd is comfortable in winter storms. More importantly, it has a bark that causes fear in normal predators, such as wolves, bears, and similar creatures of animal like intelligence and habit (causing predators to make a morale check, suffering a -5% penalty for every 2 Davendown Shepherds, rounded down). The bark would also frighten off herd animals, if the Davendown Shepherds were to consider such creatures a threat and decide to move them along. The Davendown Shepherd also exudes an aura which has a calming influence on domestic animals and people (giving them a +10% morale bonus). The men and women who tend the flocks of sheep, goats and cattle in the Lakelands often have 3 to 5 Davendown Shepherds as companions and working dogs.

The Davendown Shepherd is a big dog, derived from various bloodlines from the Old Baronies. They stand 30 to 34" at the withers, and 120 to 150 lbs, with long and tangled white-grey fur. While they fight like berserkers if their flock or people are under threat (+2 to hit and damage, but only if the people and flock are present and under threat), they make poor war animals, and prefer

not to be taken indoors (losing their surprise bonuses and ability to fight like a berserker).

Davendown Shepherd AC 6, MV 12", HD 2+2, Atts 1, Dmg 1d6, SA bark, berserker frenzy, SD surprised 1 in 6, MR standard, AL Neutral, Int Semi, Size M, XPV 35 xp + 3 xp/hp + 3 SA

Lakeland Mutt

A mongrel breed, this big dog looks like a shaggy, floppy-eared wolf. They were also described by the Bandit King as "a lot like the Lakelanders, a bit stupid looking, with a big happy grin and tongue hanging out of their mouths - right up to the point where they show you they gots teeth, by sinking 'em inta ya".

The Lakeland Mutt is an alert breed (surprised 1 in 10), brave and loyal (+15% morale protecting home and family, but no bonuses otherwise, and +3 save vs. charm if a family member is there). A big dog (about 28 to 36" at the withers, and weighing between 120 and 160 lbs), the Lakeland Mutt's shaggy coat makes it appear even bigger.

They are also surprisingly tough (+1 save vs poison (+3 vs ingested poisons, as they have a reputation as being garbage guts), cold, death magic). Unfortunately, their thick coat can lead to overheating in hot conditions, and they save at -2 vs. fire and heat related effects.

The Mutt is a poor tracker (10% chance only), and is not very stealthy (having a tendency to bark at anything and everything, eliminating any bonuses to surprise that a group they accompany may have, reducing chances of surprising someone to 1 in 6), but they are alert (surprised only 1 in 6). This tendency to bark at everything means that the Lakeland Mutt is not used as a hunting dog, but it does make it a useful yard dog. The amount of barking cannot be understated; Lakeland Mutts bark when they are happy, startled, see someone, are bored, are hungry, want to know where someone is, etc. They have a wide range of vocalization, so those familiar with the breed can quickly learn what a particular bark means.

Lakeland Mutt AC 7, MV 15", HD 2+2, Atts 1, Dmg 1d4, SA n/a, SD surprised 1 in 6, save at +1 or better vs poison, morale bonus, resistant to charm, SW noisy, save at -2 vs fire, MR standard, AL Neutral, Int Semi, Size M, XPV 35 + 3 xp/hp + 1 SA

Lakeland Terrier

A mid-sized dog, the Lakeland terrier has a significant range in size, from 25" to 33" at the withers and weighing 60 to 100 lbs when fully grown. The Lakeland terrier is described by many breeders as "a bit of a mutt, crossed with something that snuck under the fence". The breed runs true however, and is loyal, tough, and brave. The elven hero Gil'Galaith is known to have described the Lakeland Terrier as being "much like the people of the Lakelands themselves, a mix of many things, seemingly ordinary, but not to be underestimated for they rise to greatness when it is required of them – and they will stand true by their friends in the face of any storm".

Reminiscent of a freakishly big and long-legged, wire-coated Jack Russel, these mutts almost always have a little bit of something else in their features (like the webbed feet of a retriever, or a bigger snout showing some hound heritage). Their coats are predominantly grey, with splotches of white and brown, and the occasional black markings at the face.

When hunting, this breed slinks through tall grass and brush, bursting out of hiding to chase their prey silently (surprising prey 3 in 6). Relatively alert, the Lakeland Terrier is surprised 1 in 6. They are playful and willful (saving vs. charm effects at +2), and notorious chewers and food thieves, but ridiculously loyal to their families (+15% loyalty and morale to their master and their family), and have been known to stand and fight in ridiculous situations to protect their families.

Unfortunately, the Lakeland Terrier has a short attention span. If it is not being entertained or in the middle of something exciting or interesting, a Lakeland Terrier is likely to go looking for something to do. In order to follow orders for any period of time (such as "Stay" when the owner goes to look in a cave), the dog must make a

Wisdom check to follow the instructions (with Wisdom as described on page 79 of the DMG).

Lakeland Terrier AC 7, MV 15", HD 2, Atts 1, Dmg 1d4, SA surprise 3 in 6, SD surprised 1 in 6, resistant to charm, MR standard, AL Neutral, Int Semi, Size S to M, XPV 28 + 2 xp/hp

Burrfoot Pointer

The Halflings of the Lakelands are a stay-at-home bunch, wandering only far enough afield to go bird or rabbit hunting (the halflings consider birding and rabbiting to be the highest form of recreation, edged out only by preparing and eating the spoils of these undertakings). Given this favored pastime, it is hardly surprising that the Burrfoot Pointer is the companion and hunting dog favored by the Halflings.

The Burrfoot is small enough to not be intimidating or destructive inside a Halfling home, but is big enough to be an excellent bird hunting dog (about 15 to 16" at the withers, and weighing 40 to 50 lbs). It excels at flushing game birds, and retrieving birds knocked out of the sky by Halfling slingers (striking at +2 against airborne targets, like birds or stirges).

The Burrfoot is calm (+5% to its morale), but avoids combat. However, when hunting it is a fiend, and is able to detect concealed or invisible creatures 45% of the time (in a 18" radius outdoors), gaining surprise 3 in 6, and able to sprint at 24" for 3 rounds (requiring 2 rounds of rest afterwards), rushing small game animals before they can react and escape. They are as stealthy as the halflings they accompany on a bird or rabbit hunt. They only bark if in fear, or if their home or territory is invaded (and are surprised only 1 in 6), but never bark on the hunt, unless harmed or in danger.

The dog has a classic retriever frame, but has been bred to have short, non-shedding cream and tan colored fur (halflings are nothing if not tidy). They swim well, but do not do well in the cold (saving at -2 vs. cold-related effects). The Burrfoot clan claims to have developed this breed, which is disputed by the Tangletoes clan who claim that they developed it in the Burrfoot Hills. This dispute runs so deeply that these two clans will actually come to blows if an argument about the origins of the breed occurs. In fact, more than one human or dwarf with a rough sense of humor has intentionally provoked such an argument just to watch the normally pacifistic Halflings moved to violence.

Burrfoot Pointer AC 7, MV 15", HD 1, Atts 1, Dmg 1d3, SA sprint, +2 to strike flying foes, surprise foes 3 in 6, SD surprised 1 in 6, detect invisible (45%), SW save at -2 vs cold, AL Neutral, Int Semi, Size S, XPV 22 xp + 1 xp/hp

Li-Fuang's Pin

This silver hairpin is as thin as an acupuncture needle, and once held up the ebony tresses of the beautiful sage Li-Fuang.

When slid into the temple area of a man-sized or smaller sized humanoid, the pin's magic activates, subverting the mind of the 'stabbed' to the pin wielder. A 'to-hit' roll is required to insert the pin (in combat, called shot penalties apply) and a successful saving throw versus Spells at -4 will resist the pin's magic. If this saving throw is failed, a telepathic bond is established between the victim and the pin wielder (there is no range limit for this effect provided both victim and wielder remain on the same plane). The victim will obey all commands of the pin wielder except suicide, even those that go against their natural alignment.

The pin's magic remains in effect as long as the pin remains inserted. If removed, the pin's spell is broken, but a System Shock check will be required, failure indicating the victim's mind has been broken and insanity has set in (determine randomly as per DMG).

Once removed, the pin may be inserted into another victim.

GP value 30,000; XP value 5,000

by Dan Rasaiah

Political Treasures in D&D

by John W. Vogel

There's more to treasure than money and magic

The point of most D&D campaigns, as we all know, is for a young adventurer to make his way in the world by battling horrific monsters in dismal dungeons, and gaining skill (experience points), gold, and magic items the while. While this is certainly fun (it has occupied more of my leisure hours than I care to admit) it often misses a very important part of the treasures that the heroes of myth, fairy tale and fantasy novel or movie seek. These are the treasures - we might call them political treasures – that come from earning the gratitude of the rich and powerful of the world.

In Raymond E. Feist's novel, *Magician: Apprentice*, first of the *Midkemia* series, the young apprentice magician, Pug, saves the life of the daughter of the Duke Borric conDoin from being eaten by a troll, and is rewarded with lands and a noble title. In the most famous fantasy novel of the modern world, Aragorn seeks, of course, to destroy evil and the dominion of Sauron, but his secondary goal is very much to reestablish his line and become king of the West. Even Conan, arguably the most D&D-like adventurer of those listed above, goes through several political windfalls (I remember him becoming ruler of the Black Kingdoms, briefly, before being tossed out by a coup) and ultimately becomes king of Aquilonia.

This phenomenon is not confined to modern fantasy, either. Many of Grimms' fairy tales, as well as others from around the world, involve the younger sons of peasants defeating some monster, rescuing the captive princess, and finally being given the fair maiden's hand, along with half her father's kingdom.

Of course, this is reflective of European medieval culture, as well as the cultures of many times and places throughout the world, in which upward mobility in class was non-existent outside of distinguishing oneself in battle. A commoner in 13th century France, England, Germany, Spain, etc., had no hope of moving up in the rigid hierarchy of feudalism, unless he was lucky enough to be knighted on the battlefield for bravery, or, as the odd custom of the time was, by a fallen enemy knight, for the purposes of bringing the common soldier under the code of chivalry, and thus preventing him from executing his defeated foe.

Treasures of this type also have the benefit of additional roleplaying elements for the campaign. It is one thing to gain a flaming sword, but it is quite another to rescue a captive princess. The first gives you greater power, while the second gives you additional contacts in the gaming world as well. While the father may well be glad to see his daughter returned alive when he thought her dead, it is also possible that he is not. What if a ruthless sister or stepmother secretly saw to it that she was placed in harm's way in the first place, to get her out of the way of some political interest of their own, as the wicked queen did with Snow White? Some such treasures can become adventures in themselves.

The following article attempts to right this situation by adding "political treasures" to the campaign.

Discovering Political Treasures

Political treasures can come about as a result of adventuring, or for service in war in some cases. What is really important is the form the treasure takes, as this is

where the roleplaying aspect comes in. Usually, a political treasure will take the form of a captive that the monsters are preparing to enslave or just eat. This will, in some cases, require some skill on the part of the GM to adjudicate. It is certainly possible that bandits have taken a wealthy merchant prisoner, and intend to ransom him. Orcs, on the other hand, would likely just tie him up and throw him in the corner to await their next meal. Ravenous and unintelligent monsters like giant spiders might have him paralyzed in a web sack, while giant wolverines would probably only have taken him prisoner in the sense that they have not yet been able to reach him and pull him down from the tree where he has taken refuge from their attacks.

Another possibility is the intelligent monster that is trying to save itself. "Don't kill me! I can take you to the captive princess my pals are going to eat!"

For those who add war gaming on the battlefield to their roleplaying adventures (as with D&D Miniatures), there should be an equal chance any time an enemy unit is destroyed or routed that a political treasure is revealed. Often this might be at the enemy's baggage train, but a wounded and unconscious baron who needs to be returned to his castle is equally possible.

Political Treasures List

Note that the list below only tells you what the political treasure is likely to be, but this usually comes about through rescuing some person in some way, and it is up to the GM to flesh out exactly who is encountered. For instance, someone who can get you in with the Steel Bank as an investor may be a wealthy commodities merchant, but could also be that person's young son, aged mother, or valued servant. An interesting twist is to make the person unconscious and perhaps of no apparent value. If the PCs take a cavalier attitude about unconscious prisoners, they may very well be losing out.

Note also that this list is generic enough to work in any edition of D&D.

- Steel Bank Investor: The Steel Bank of Zorick is run by the clan of the gnomes of Zorick who are the shrewdest and most merciless investors the realm has ever known. Not just anyone can make the necessary contacts to invest in the Steel Bank, and those who do so can gain great wealth indeed. An investor in the Steel Bank (which always gets its due) can invest any amount of money at the beginning of any year. At the end of the year, the investment will earn 2d10%. However, for the investment to mature, the character must allow it to remain in the bank for the whole year, and it cannot be used for any other purpose. If the money is withdrawn, it is penalized by 50%, and no return is earned on it. There is a small chance that the investment will be lost – through no fault of the Steel Bank of course.
- Gentry: The character is raised to the rank of page, if he is not yet of at least the order of the gentry. A character who is already a page is raised to the rank of squire. A character that is already a squire, or a member of the orders of the chivalry or nobility, gains no further promotion. However, any character who gains this treasure gains one Influence (see Powerful Friends, below) per year, and a stipend of 100 gold pieces per year. The ranks within the order of the gentry are page and squire.
- Chivalry: The character is raised to the rank of knight bachelor, if he is not yet in the order of the chivalry. A character who is already at least a knight bachelor is raised one rank within the order. A character who is already a baronet, or a member of the order of the nobility, gains no further promotion. A character who is not of at least the order of the gentry cannot be raised to the chivalry. However, any character who gains this treasure also gains 1d3 Influence (see Powerful Friends, below) per year, and a stipend of 500 gold pieces per year. The ranks within the order of the chivalry are knight bachelor, knight banneret, and baronet.
- Nobility: The character is raised to the rank of baron, if he is not yet of at least the order of the nobility. A character who is already at least a baron is raised one rank within the chivalric order. A character who is already a duke gains no further promotion. A character that is not of at least the order of the chivalry cannot be raised to the nobility. However, any character who gains this treasure also gains 1d6 Influence (see Powerful Friends, below) per year, and a stipend of 1,000 gold pieces per year. The ranks within the order of the nobility are baron, viscount, marquis, count, earl and duke.
- Princess Bride: The character rescues a maiden daughter of a powerful person (1-4= daughter of a random noble, 5-6= younger daughter of a king). If the princess takes a liking to the character (5+ on d6, +1 if the character's charisma is 14+), she will marry him if asked, provided she is not already

married. If a marriage takes place, the character is immediately raised to the order of the gentry if not at least gentry already. Whether this happens or not, the character immediately has one more roll from this table bestowed on him by a grateful father (two more rolls if she is a king's daughter).

- Signet Ring: This item is given by a grateful noble of random rank, and indicates a favor owed. This favor must also be honored by the noble's heirs. However, a noble may try to have the character assassinated, or just renege, if the favor asked would badly damage his house.
- Companion Guards: A company of 3d4 elite troops are given by a grateful ruler (1-4=a random noble, 5-6=a king). These troops are financed by the noble or king who awards them to the character, so he never has to pay for them out of his own pocket. They are of excellent quality, typically one level higher than the ordinary level of troops in the campaign if granted by a noble, or two levels higher if granted by a king and generally with excellent quality horses (if cavalry) and masterwork weapons and armor. They will fight on the battlefield, but not in the dungeon.
- Castle: A basic castle (keep and curtain wall, with associated villages) is awarded to the character by a grateful ruler. To keep the mechanics simple, the castle should be assumed to provide for its own upkeep, and that of whatever peasants it defends, so determine a random annual income for it, say 2d4 x 2,000 g.p. for an average campaign, adjust up or down as desired. This income must be spent either on troops or investments or a combination of both, which, if the character is not a ship owner or bank investor, will return an investment as per a Steel Bank Investor (above), but only at a rate of 1d12% per year. There is a 1 on 1d6 chance per year that the castle will be attacked by enemy armies, raiders, barbarians, monsters, or whatever.
- Palisade and Village: As castle (above) but this represents a smaller holding: typically a single village surrounded by a wooden palisade. It produces roughly a tenth of what a castle's holdings do, with the same restrictions on how the money can be spent.
- City: As castle (above) but this represents a larger holding: typically a walled city with associated castles and villages. It produces roughly five times what a castle's holdings do, with the same restrictions on how the money can be spent.
- Privy Council: This counts as Gentry (above) but grants 3d6 Influence (see Powerful Friends, below) per year, and the character gains a seat on the king's private council. The Privy Council meets annually at the winter solstice to decide policy, and the councilor can have up to two private audiences with the king per year.
- Defender of the Faith: A grateful church grants this title to the character, which includes ten free levels of clerical spells per year at its temple or a temple of any allied deity. Permanent +2 to reaction with clerics of this temple.
- Powerful Friends: The character's deeds have won him renown among the mighty of the land. This translates to 1d6 Influence points per year. Influence can be spent on a one-for-one basis for rolls to persuade the rich and powerful, from the captain of the city watch to the emperor himself, as well as non-governmental VIPs, such as wealthy merchants and powerful clerics. Each Influence can only be used once per game year, and once used is expended until next year when all Influence is rerolled. Influence cannot be saved from year to year.

  Influence is like a non-magical *wish* spell in some ways. It can do pretty much anything, but the difference is that it takes time, and there is always the question of how much Influence you have to spend. It is always the GM's call as to how much Influence a particular action requires. To start a border war between two minor barons might be relatively easy, while sending two major empires to war might require a hundred or more Influence points, just to have a chance. It's all up to the GM.

  Also note that Influence can be used to oppose reaction rolls of whatever type, as well as to oppose other attempts at Influence. As long as two players both know what is going on, and have the ability to communicate with the relevant parties, each could spend Influence on opposite sides of an issue. Thus, if a prominent figure (or another PC) is going to be tried for high treason, the law roll made by the defense attorney might be modified positively by Influence (if you can get to the judge) by persons who want him acquitted, and negatively by persons who want him convicted.
- General: The character is promoted to the rank of general in the army of the king. He commands in battle, must be obeyed by the rank and file as well as lower level officers, and gets a +2 reaction bonus

with all soldiers in non-military situations. His rate of pay is 5,000 gold pieces per year.

- Regent of the Steel Bank: As Steel Bank Investor (above) but 2d20% return on investments (increased ability to manipulate currency markets). If the character has this treasure and a trade fleet, the total return on investments is 3d20% per year. Also gives 2d6 Influence per year. Note that only a character who is already a Steel Bank investor can become a regent of the bank. Otherwise this treasure grants only 1,000 gold pieces.
- Picaro: This is a clever, comical servant who gets his master out of trouble, or provides him with valuable information, but at the expense of making him look somewhat foolish. If the picaro ever gets into a situation where he would have to fight, he avoids it in a somewhat comical manner as decided on by the GM. He may get pulled away with his foot caught in his donkey's stirrup (he never rides a horse), or slip on a rotten vegetable and plunge over a cliff, only to return later after some miraculous misadventure.

  The function of the picaro is to save his master's life, and gain him esoteric information, each up to once per year. Again, this happens by misadventure, at the master's expense. Word of this always spreads, so each use of the picaro costs the master a 1 point penalty to reaction rolls, as word of the foolish situation spreads. This effect lasts for one year, and is cumulative.
- Dwarf Smith: Will forge any magical weapons, armor or shields desired by the character, worth up to a maximum of 2d4 x 1,000 gold pieces.
- Alchemist: Will brew any magical potions, elixirs, glues, dusts or powders desired by the character, worth up to a maximum of 1d4 x 1,000 gold pieces.
- Trade Fleet: Allows the character to invest as a Steel Bank Investor, but the fleet always has a chance of suffering disaster (1 on 1d6) on any yearly mission. It survives, but the entire investment is lost. However, this can be resolved by adventure, if the player chooses to accompany his fleet on its voyage.
- Crown: The character is made crown prince, or king if the king is already dead. The king has a capital city that produces ten times as much as a castle, with the same limitations on spending the money. He also gains 10d6 Influence each year. Note that the character must already be nobility to gain this treasure. Otherwise, it counts only as 1d6 Influence.

Gaining Political Treasures

Generally speaking, finding a political treasure is, unlike a magic wand or sack of platinum coins, not sufficient. You have to get the person who is pivotal to the treasure back to his or her home to make it happen. The wounded Dwarf Smith, for example, might require a journey into the mountains to his underworld realm before he can forge that magic sword.

Jealousy, Bitterness and Resistance

Of course, as we all know from fantasy novels, not everyone is always pleased with the rescuer who brings home the captive princess and claims her and half the kingdom. Among them are the foppish marquis to whom she is betrothed, and her sullen brother, who stood to inherit the half kingdom which this upstart adventurer just acquired.

Thus there is always a chance, say, a base 35%, that someone is contesting the character's right to receive the reward. If this happens, he can attempt to talk his way out of the situation, using diplomacy, bluff, or other appropriate abilities, as well as Influence, if available.

If this doesn't work, a duel may be required for the character to assert his rights. Generally, this will not be a lethal duel (65% chance to first blood only), though there is always the chance that someone involved is *really* upset.

Ability Checks:
Are You Doing It Wrong?

by the Goblin's Henchman

Dies, Dies, and Statistics ...

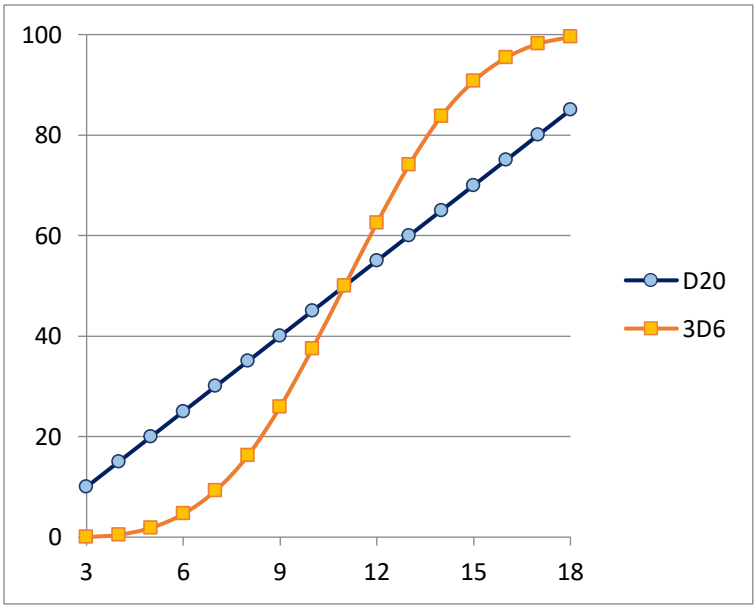
Author's note: *This article came about by listening to various discussions on the Roll for Initiative (RFI) podcast about the best way to make Ability Checks. The author compares the D20 method to the 3D6 method, and also considers other options. The author would be interested to hear from anyone who has any comments on this article.*

Ability Checks

This is also referred to here as Skill Checks.

The answer to the question posed in the article title is: Of course not, the DM is always right! However, this article hopes to give a bit more insight into the common methods used to make Ability Checks.

Background: What is an Ability Check? An Ability Check is a game mechanic used by a DM to determine if a character could achieve a task, where it is not certain if that task could be done (or not). For example, in AD&D an Ability Check is not required to see if a character can tie their shoelaces, but would probably be required if a character attempts to jump from one moving platform to another.



Graph 1

Please note, for all graphs probability is on the vertical scale, i.e. 0% to 100%, and Ability Score is on the horizontal scale, i.e. 3 to 18.

Two Main Methods

To the best of the author's knowledge, there are two main ways that Ability Checks are usually done by DMs.

Method 1 (D20 method)

The first method uses a D20, the player needing to roll below (some DMs use equal or below) one of their Ability Scores, e.g. STR, DEX, INT, WIZ, CON or CHR.

The DM usually adds a modifier to the roll if the task is difficult e.g. +1, +2 or +3 etc., or could even apply negative modifiers to the roll if the task is particularly easy.

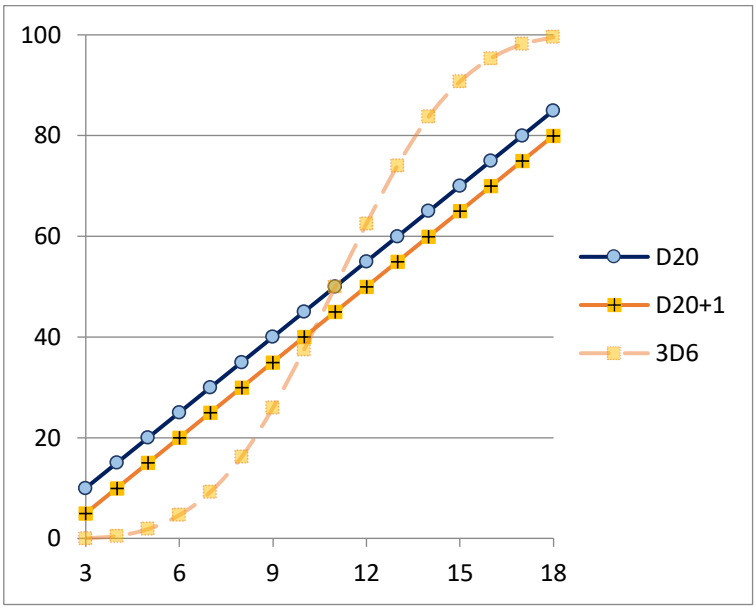
The Author briefly notes that there is a method that uses a D100 rolled against 5 times the Ability Score of the character being tested. However, this method is very similar to **Method 1** (D20 method) where the roll needs to be equal or below the Ability Score to pass the test.

Method 2 (nD6 method)

The second main method used by DMs is rolling and summing multiple D6 rolls (usually 3D6). Again, like **Method 1**, the Ability Check is passed if the sum of the D6 rolls is below (some DMs use equal or below) the Ability Score being tested. With this method, if the task is particularly difficult the DM may include one or more extra D6s e.g. summing 4d6 or even 5D6.

Which method is best?

Well that's the wrong question. A better question is when is **Method 1** (D20 method) more appropriate than **Method 2** (nD6 method), and vice versa?



Graph 2

To best understand (and compare) the two methods it is best to look at a graph (see **Graph 1** above) of the probability of passing an Ability Check using each method.

At this point, it might be worth getting a cup of coffee before going on, or you could skip to the **Recommendations** heading at the end of this article.

In **Method 1** (the D20 method; I'm using the roll below the ability score version) it can be seen from **Graph 1** that the chance of passing a test increases linearly with the Ability Score being tested. That is, the graph gives a straight line.

In that way a character with a very poor Ability Score (e.g. 4) always has a 15% chance of passing a test, and a character with a very high Ability Score (e.g. 18) always has a 15% chance of failing the same test.

→ Therefore, the best way to use **Method 1** (D20 method) is when the task being attempted gradually gets more difficult to pass as Ability Scores go down.

In **Method 2** (e.g. 3D6; again I'm using the roll below the ability score version) it can be seen that the chance of passing the test increases massively with an increase in the Ability Score being tested. In fact, the graph is pretty much bipolar in nature.

In that way with **Method 2** (with 3D6) a character with a very low Ability Score (e.g. 4) has virtually no chance of passing the test (i.e. about 0.5%), but a character with a very high Ability Score (e.g. 18) can virtually never fail the same test (e.g. about 99.5%). Note if the character has an Ability Score of 3, they can never pass the 3D6 method (in the version where the player needs to roll below the Ability Score to pass the test). The graph has a very steep section in the middle (i.e. 9 to 14) where the chance of passing the test increases about 10% per point of Ability Score. If the characters in your game never have scores below about 9, then maybe **Method 2** (3D6 method) will work OK for you as the default check method, as long as you are happy that Ability Scores above 14 will positively 'cake walk' the test.

→ Therefore, the best way to use **Method 2** (nD6 method) is when the task being tested becomes exponentially more difficult to pass the lower the Ability Score, but is a 'cake walk' for a gifted character. Again, think of this test as being bipolar in nature.

Below is a Table giving some examples of when **Method 1** (D20 method) or **Method 2** (nD6 method) might be more appropriate:

Ability Score	Method 1 - D20 method	Method 2 - nD6 method
STR	Pulling a load up an incline	Deadlifting a heavy weight above head
DEX	Carrying a tray of drinks in a busy bar	Juggling (maybe with knives)
INT	Stock taking in a store	Doing calculus
WIS	Buying a suitable horse	Attaining a Zen state
CON	Long jog	Holding breath for over 3 minutes
CHR	Bargaining with a merchant	Inspiring a crowd with a speech

Modifiers

With **Method 1** (D20 method) each +/- 1 modifier added to the D20 roll lowers/raises the chance of passing the test by 5% (see **Graph 2** above).

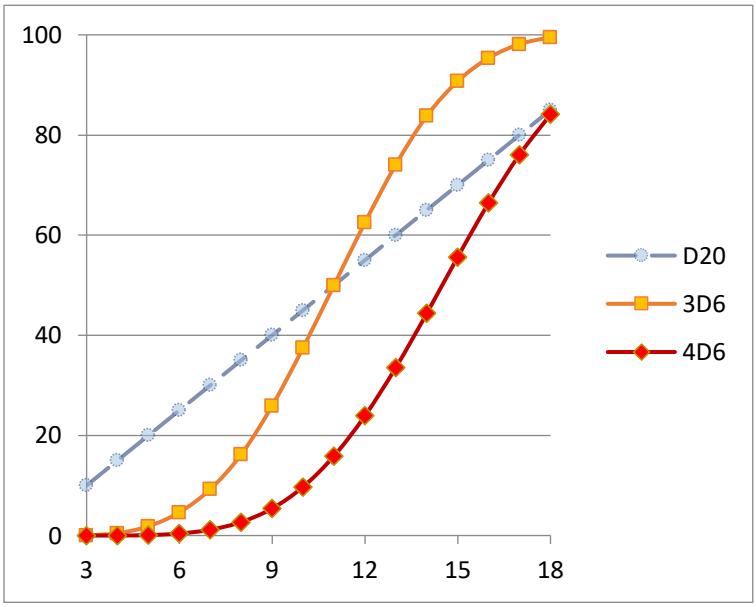
With **Method 2** (nD6 method) each additional D6 added to the roll (e.g. from 3D6 to 4d6; e.g. **Graph 3**) makes it even more impossible for a character with a low Ability Score to pass the test, but does have some lowering effect on those with very high Ability Scores.

Summary on the Two Main Methods

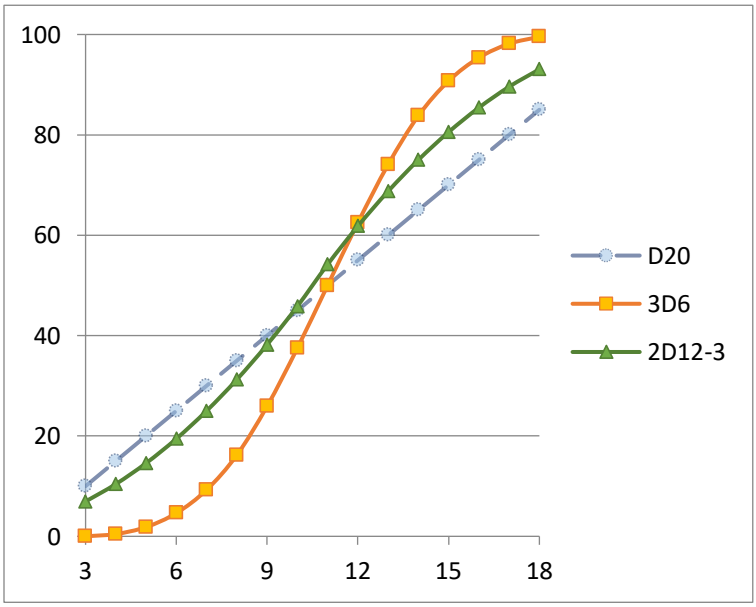
In summary, use:

- Method 1 (D20 method) for tasks that are generally achievable (but which even very gifted characters can still fail);

- Method 2 (nD6) for tasks that are virtually impossible to pass for characters with low Ability Scores, but are super easy to pass for characters with high Ability Scores (a bipolar test). Those in the middle will also have a reasonably poor chance of passing the test.



Graph 3



Graph 4

Other options?

Is there some 'middle ground' method between **Method 1** (D20 method) and **Method 2** (nD6 method)?

The author has considered the following two methods (it is possible other people have used these methods before also):

Method 3 (2D12-3)

Method 3 (summing 2D12 and subtracting 3 from the total) is compared with the 3D6 method in **Graph 4** (see above). For the sake of reference, **Method 1** (D20 Method) is also included in the graph.

In **Method 3**, characters with a low Ability Score have an increased chance of passing a test, and characters with very high Ability Scores have a lower chance of passing the test (compared to **Method 2**). **Method 3** effectively 'softens' the bipolar nature of the 3D6 method a little. **Method 3** may sound a little odd, but by using two dice (i.e. 2D12) instead of 3 dice (i.e. 3D6) it 'softens' the probability curve, and subtracting 3 from the total of the 2D12s 'centers' the probability curve better over the range 3 to 18 for Ability Scores.

Therefore, **Method 3** (2D12-3 method) appears to be a better all-around default method than the more bipolar **Method 2** (3D6), because like **Method 1** (D20 method), it at least gives low Ability Scores some chance of passing a test, and gives very high Ability Scores the chance of actual failure, but without having a linear probability 'curve' like **Method 1 (**that some DMs dislike).

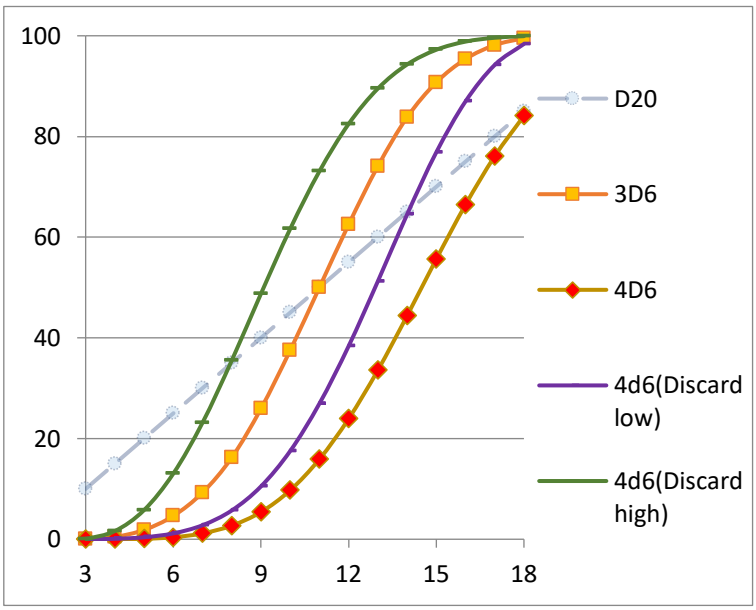
The author also looked at methods that involve rolling 4d6 and dropping the (a) highest or (b) lowest roll, as shown in **Graph 5**. These are named here as **Method 2 (a) and (b)** as these use multiple D6s. These methods are still mostly like **Method 2** (3D6 method), but make a less harsh change than merely adding an extra D6 (or removing one) from **Method 2** (3D6 method). However, they are still pretty bipolar in nature.

Method 1(a) and 1(b) *(rolling 2D20 and (a) discarding the higher roll or (b) discarding the lower roll)*

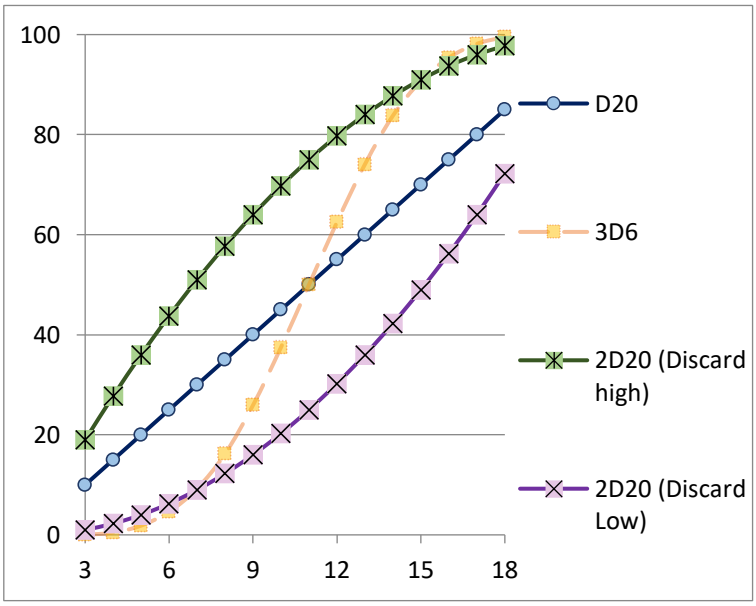
Method 1(a) rolling 2D20 and discarding the higher roll or **Method 1(b)** discarding the lower roll are compared to **Method 1** (D20 method) in **Graph 6**. For reference, **Method 2** (3D6 method) is also included in the graph.

In this case, when **Method 1(a)** is used (2D20 discard the higher roll), the chance of passing the test increases for all the Ability Scores tested, especially the lower scores. Conversely, when **Method 1(b)** is used (2D20 discard the lower roll) it is much harder to pass the test for every Ability Score.

In effect, **Method 1(a)** bends the linear probability curve of **Method 1** upwards and **Method 1(b)** bends the linear probability curve of **Method 1** downwards, but the change in probabilities for the middle Ability Score section is less steep than in **Method 2** (3D6 method).



Graph 5



Graph 6

In reality, what you are doing here is giving the character two chances to pass the test (in **Method 1(a)**), i.e. they get a 'mulligan'; or you are requiring the character to pass the test twice in a row (in **Method 1(b)**); but to save time, you might as well get the player to roll two D20s at the same time.

Recommendations (for what they are worth)

On balance, based on the analysis done, the author recommends using the following Ability Check methods in the following scenarios:

Based on a D20-type system (see **Graph 6**):

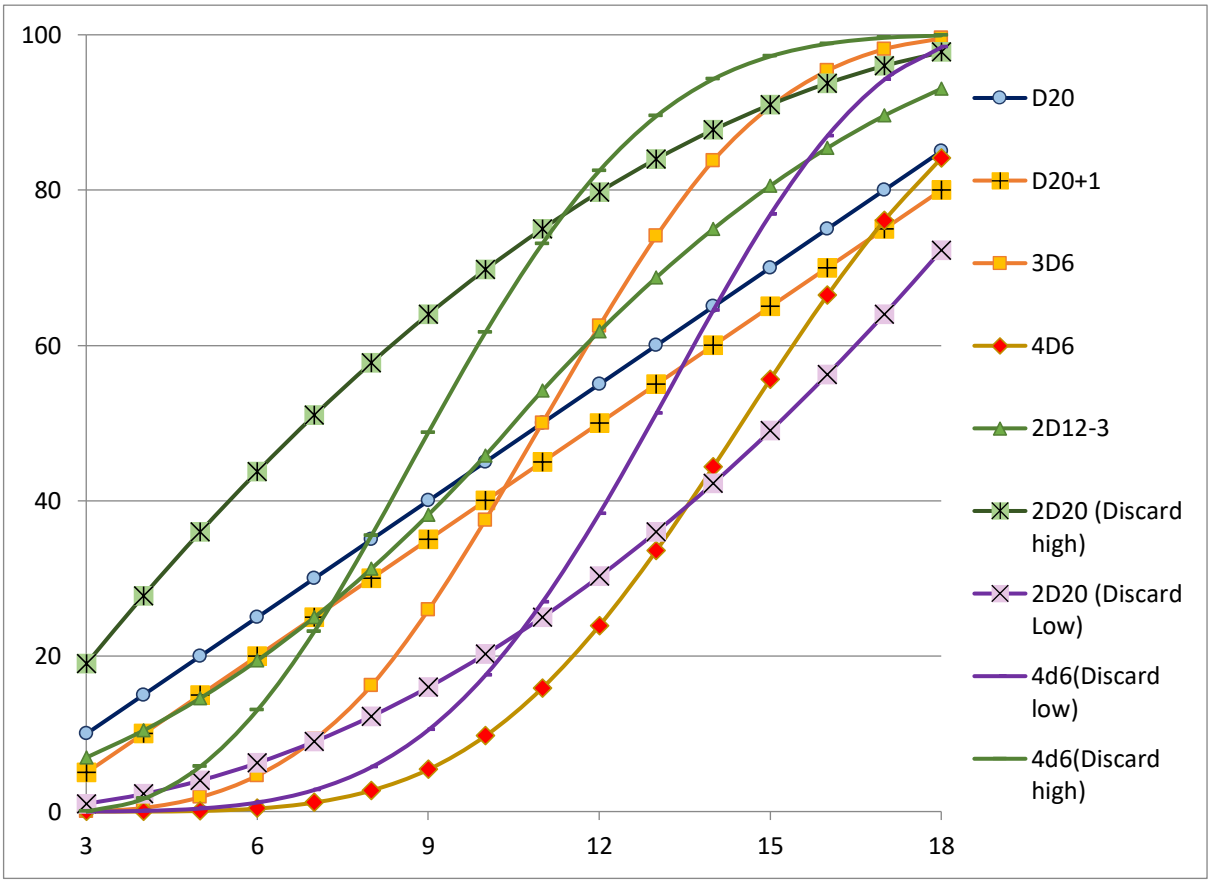
- Use Method 1 (the D20 method) for Ability Checks that are of 'normal' difficultly. Method 1 offers the advantage that any character has some reasonable chance of passing (or failing) an Ability check (i.e. the probability is never lower than 10% and never higher than 85%). Adding a +/- 1 modifier to the roll has only a modest effect on the probability. To really make it easier use Method 1(a), and to make it much harder use Method 1(b).
- Use Method 1(a) (2D20 discard the higher roll) if the task is really quite easy, but nonetheless there is a chance it could be failed by any character (i.e. even the biggest 'klutz' (using American parlance) has a 20% chance of passing a DEX check)
- Use Method 1(b) (2D20 discard the lower roll) if the task is really quite difficult for everyone, including very gifted characters (i.e. even the brightest student only has about 70% chance of passing an INT check).

Based on an nD6-type system (see **Graph 5**)

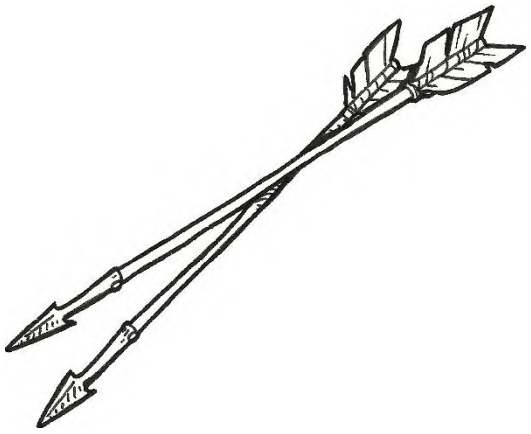
- Use Method 2 (3D6 method) only for tasks that the very gifted will pass (barring a freak roll), and where a low Ability Score simply invariably fails (barring a freak roll) (i.e. a character of 3 INT will never be able to do calculus, but Stephen Hawking can do it in his sleep – forgive the out of game example). To repeat the analysis above, the nD6 method is bipolar in nature.
- Use Method 3 (2D12-3 method; **Graph 4**) for a 'soften' version of Method 2 (3D6 method). The lower end Ability Scores have a better chance of passing the test, and the upper end Ability Scores have a reduced chance of passing a test (compared to Method 2). Personally, the author thinks that this is a better overall 'general' method than Method 2 (3D6 method), but is

probably still a bit too lopsided when compared to Method 1 (D20 method).

- Use Method 2 (4d6 method) for tasks that only the very gifted have any chance of passing; and 5D6 where super Ability Scores and good die rolls are needed to pass the test.
- Use Method 2(b) (4d6 drop lowest roll method) for a result that is about halfway between 3D6 and 4d6 methods.
- Use Method 2(a) (4d6 drop highest roll method) for when the gifted find the task even easier and the poor Ability Scores are given at least some chance of passing the test.



Graph 7 – All the probability 'curves' given together



The numbers

For those that are interested in the raw percentage numbers of passing an Ability Check for each Ability Score here they are, rounded to 2 decimal places (and hopefully error free!). In each case, I've used the method where to pass the test the player needs to roll below the ability score.

Stat	d20	d20+1	3d6	4d6	2d12-3	2d20 (discard low)	2d20 (discard high)	4d6 (discard low)	4d6 (discard high)
3	10	5	None	None	6.94	19.00	1.00	None	None
4	15	10	0.46	None	10.42	27.75	2.25	0.08	1.62
5	20	15	1.85	0.08	14.58	36.00	4.00	0.39	5.79
6	25	20	4.63	0.39	19.44	43.75	6.25	1.16	13.04
7	30	25	9.26	1.16	25.00	51.00	9.00	2.78	23.15
8	35	30	16.20	2.70	31.25	57.75	12.25	5.71	35.49
9	40	35	25.93	5.40	38.19	64.00	16.00	10.49	48.77
10	45	40	37.50	9.72	45.83	69.75	20.25	17.52	61.65
11	50	45	50.00	15.90	54.17	75.00	25.00	26.93	73.07
12	55	50	62.50	23.92	61.81	79.75	30.25	38.35	82.48
13	60	55	74.07	33.56	68.75	84.00	36.00	51.23	89.51
14	65	60	83.80	44.37	75.00	87.75	42.25	64.51	94.29
15	70	65	90.74	55.63	80.56	91.00	49.00	76.85	97.22
16	75	70	95.37	66.44	85.42	93.75	56.25	86.96	98.84
17	80	75	98.15	76.08	89.58	96.00	64.00	94.21	99.61
18	85	80	99.54	84.10	93.06	97.75	72.25	98.38	99.92

Jamyang's Singing Bowl

This large 1' diameter bronze bowl produces magical harmonic overtones when a piece of wood or leather wrapped mallet is rubbed around the rim. On the first round of activation the bowl mimics the effect of a **Protection from Evil** spell within a 20' radius, except the applicable bonuses and penalties are +1 and -1 respectively. On the second round as the sound amplifies, the bonuses and penalties increase to +2 and -2 respectively, and on the third round and each round thereafter, the bonuses and penalties will be +3/-3, provided the bowl is continually rung.

Whilst the bowl is being rung, no other actions can be completed by the bowl ringer. When the bowl ringer stops ringing the bowl, the bowl's effects remain for a 1 round delay, then stop.

GP value 20,000; XP value 2,500

Hangman's Necklace

Once worn this nondescript gold necklace transforms into a spectral noose and hauls the wearer 2' off the ground and hangs them. The wearer will survive a number of rounds equal to their constitution divided by 5 (rounded up) before dying. The noose can only be damaged by magical weapons, is AC5, and can sustain 20 hp of cutting damage before dissipating. A successful dispel magic spell will also dissipate the noose. If the noose is not destroyed, it will revert to necklace form after 1 turn, with any damage sustained being completely regenerated.

GP value 2,000; XP value nil

by Dan Rasaiah

Making the 'God Call'

by the Goblin's Henchman

A more sophisticated game mechanic for characters praying for divine intervention

Author's note: This article has been inspired by a discussion on the Roll for Initiative (RFI) podcast (one of the earlier ones!), where a discussion took place about the possibility of a character making a 'God Call', i.e. a plea to a Deity for help. The author has provided some suggested rules for making a God Call. The author would be interested to hear from anyone who has any comments on this article, and in particular from anyone who uses these suggested rules in their game.

'God Call'

In times of great need, a character might make a desperate plea for divine intervention, calling upon their Deity for assistance. Below are some suggested rules for making a God Call, which are different to the by-the-book rules. The by-the-book rules seem to allow a character to make a God Call without many restrictions, and certainly there appears to be no cost in doing so. The suggested rules below make the 'standard' God Call more difficult and they impose a stiff price for making the God Call, and in the proposed system, the character can increase the chance of making the God Call by paying a further price.

By the Book

Making a so-called 'God Call' by the book is covered in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* (DMG, pages 111-112), and reworded slightly in Legends & Lore (LL, page 9).

The by-the-book rules are summarized as follows:

- If the requester has been 'exemplary in faithfulness' and has not made such a request before, then there is a flat 10% chance that the Deity will send aid to the character in the form of some creature. However, the DMG (or LL) does not give rules for a character that has not been 'exemplary in faithfulness', or has made a God Call before.
- If a roll of '00' is made (presumably as part of the 10% chance above), there is a further probability that the Deity will come in person to help the character. That %chance is:
  - +1% per character level
  - +1% action opposes diametrically opposite alignment
  - -5% per previous intervention
  - -10% requires direct confrontation with another Deity
  - +25% acting (in)directly for the Deity
  - -5% character's alignment behavior is average
  - -10% character's alignment behavior is borderline

In the by-the-book rules there is no modifier for a character whose behavior is worse than 'borderline', so presumably the Deity will simply not appear if that is the case.

Suggested Rules

Below is a suggested alternative system for making a God Call.

The main differences between this system and the by-the-book rules are:

- Part (i) - There is a cost to making the God Call. The Character must sacrifice 1 level of experience to get a chance of being heard by the Deity. This sacrifice represents the earnestness required to be heard.
- Optionally, the chance of being heard by the Deity can be increased by sacrificing more levels of experience.
- Part (ii) – However, just because a Deity hears the plea of a character does not mean they will help them; in fact they might choose to punish the character for their impertinence. The reaction of the Deity is dictated by (a) the Deity's nature and (b) the nature of the character's plea.

Part (i) - Probability of Being Heard

To make a God Call, the character must sacrifice at least one full level of experience to their Deity.

That is, for the plea to carry enough weight to be noticed by the Deity, sufficient 'spiritual essence' must be offered up in sacrifice by the character to their Deity. The sacrificed spiritual essence takes a great toll on the mind and body of the character, and it is this toll that reduces the character's level by at least one level of experience (the character's resultant XP value being the minimum for that new level). Accordingly, making a God Call is not a trivial matter.

The character may offer up more than one level of experience to increase the chance of being noticed by the Deity. Note, multi-class (and dual-class) characters must sacrifice 1 experience level per class, but this still only counts as a single level of sacrifice (also see 'Life Mortgaging' below).

Aging – Optionally, human characters age 5 years for each level sacrificed. Other races age 5% of their race's natural lifespan per level sacrificed. If the DM does not want to use the aging rules (or wishes to apply this in addition), the DM may prefer to permit only one God Call per character in their lifetime, regardless of the result of that God Call.

Probability of being heard by the Deity:

The %chance of being heard by the Deity is the sum of the modifiers in the table below:

Value	Modifiers to the Chance of Being Heard
+ 1%	per level of the character (prior to making the God Call)
+ 3%	per level sacrificed for clerics
+ 2%	per level sacrificed for paladins (or any other spiritual class)
+1%	per level sacrificed for all other classes (if the DM allows those other non-spiritual classes to make God Calls)

However, no matter how many levels are sacrificed by the character, the %chance of being heard by the Deity cannot be higher than 90% (inclusive of any 'life mortgaging' bonus, i.e. see below)

Life mortgaging – Optionally, the DM might allow a character to offer up more experience levels to their Deity than they actually have, to increase the %chance of being heard. Levels can only be mortgaged once all (normal) experience levels have been sacrificed. Each 'mortgaged' level gives the same %bonus as in the table above. However, for each level 'mortgaged' there is a 10% chance that the Deity will collect on the 'loan', taking the character's soul instead. This 'life mortgage' roll is made before rolling to see if the Deity even hears the character's plea. For example a 7th level paladin could sacrifice 10 experience levels (reducing them to 0 level, inclusive of 3 mortgaged levels) to add a 20% (2% x 10) bonus to the %chance of being heard, giving a total of a 27% chance of being heard by their Deity. However, there is now a 30% chance that the Deity will take the Paladin's soul instead of granting the paladin's wish. Clearly, this is a steep price to pay for gaining an additional +6% chance of being heard by their Deity, i.e. taking the overall total from 21% to 27%. For clerics the risk is slightly more rewarding as they gain +3% per level sacrificed (not +2% like paladins).

Part (ii) - Deity's Reaction

Just because a Deity notices the plea of a mortal follower does not mean they will choose to help them. In fact they

might react angrily to the intrusion/impertinence of such a request.

Character Request – the DM should ask the player to state the plea they wish to make to their Deity. The DM might want to treat the character's plea like a *Wish* spell, perhaps asking the player to write the request down on a piece of paper.

Below is the suggested (unmodified) reaction of the Deity (D100):

% Roll	Deity Reaction Table
10 or less	Deity is greatly angered and takes strong action against the character, or seeks to pervert the nature of the wish made by the character
11-25	Deity is displeased (or mildly offended) and takes no action, or mild action against the character
26-50	Deity chooses not to intervene, or provides only mild assistance
51-75	Deity takes some limited action to meet the character's request
76-99	Deity takes positive action to meet the character's request, e.g. could treat the request like granting a *Wish* or *Limited Wish* spell
00+	Deity responds very positively, granting within reason the character's request. If a natural '00' was rolled, roll again, and if another natural '00' is obtained, then the Deity will appear in person to help the character

However, provided below are some possible modifiers to apply to the above roll on the Deity Reaction Table.

Deity's Reaction Modifiers

The following are suggested modifiers to be added/subtracted from the roll on the Deity Reaction Table above.

(a) Deity's Alignment Modifier

Before using the table above, it is suggested that the DM should consider the nature of the Deity. The nature (i.e. alignment) of the Deity will be important to the action they take. An evil Deity with a capricious nature might take delight in thwarting the character's plea. Lawful and neutral Deities may prefer the natural order to take its course and so not intervene. On the other hand, chaotic Deities might enjoy the tumult created by an intervention, and good Deities might choose to give help to worthy subjects.

Modifiers for the Deity's Nature:

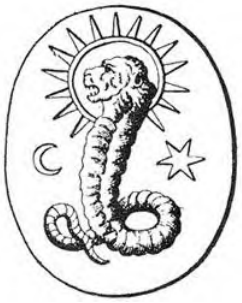
Modifier	Spiritual ethos
+ 10%	Good
- 20%	Neutral
+ 0%	Evil
	Legal ethos
+ 0%	Lawful
- 20%	Neutral
+/- 20%*	Chaotic

* = Evil Deities: equal chance of being positive or negative; Good Deities: normally positive

Therefore, a chaotic good Deity is the most likely to react favorably to a character's plea (based on the natural temperament of the Deity alone). By contrast, a true neutral Deity is the most likely to let nature take its normal course, or it might even choose to punish one of its followers who should know better than to try and twist the natural order of things.

(b) Situational Modifiers

The nature of the request will also have an effect on the Deity's reaction. For example, an evil character asking for their Deity to intervene to save a paladin's life will probably displease the Deity. Good Deities might be more motivated to grant a plea that is worthy and altruistic. Chaotic Deities might enjoy granting a request that causes the maximum amount of chaos in the world, or might simply choose to do the exact opposite of the character's plea, just to spurn the character's expectations.



Therefore, despite the natural temperament of the Deity (considered in (a) above), the Deity's actions may also be swayed by the nature/merit of the request being made by the character. That is, Deities are more likely to help a character if the character's plea is in line with their general legal (i.e. lawful, neutral or chaotic) ethos, and spiritual (i.e. good, neutral or evil) ethos.

The DM therefore could apply a modifier based on how well the request fits in with the Deity's

alignment/personality. This could be in the range ± 0 to 50%.

Below are some suggested situational modifiers:

Spiritual Situational Modifiers – Decide as best as possible if the character's plea is good, neutral or evil in nature (if in doubt, then the plea probably counts as neutral):

Pct	Spiritual Situational Modifiers
+ 10%	plea fits with the Deity's 'spiritual' ethos
- 10%	plea is one step removed from the Deity's 'spiritual' ethos (e.g. a good character requesting a neutral act)
- 30%	plea is two steps removed from the Deity's 'spiritual' ethos (e.g. a good character requesting an evil act)

Legal Situational Modifiers - Decide as best as possible if the character's plea is lawful, neutral or chaotic in nature. If in doubt, then the request is probably chaotic in nature, as the character is seeking to change the natural order of things. However, a request that results in more order might be seen as lawful:

Pct	Legal Situational Modifiers
+ 10%	plea fits with the Deity's 'legal' ethos
- 10%	plea is one step removed from the Deity's 'legal' ethos (e.g. a lawful character requesting a neutral act)
- 20%	plea is two steps removed from the Deity's 'legal' ethos (e.g. a lawful character requesting a chaotic act)

Finally, if the matter is of great importance to the Deity, the DM may choose to double the situational modifier or add an additional modifier. In addition, the DM might choose to include the modifiers that appear in the DMG (as paraphrased at the start of this article).

Worked Example 1

Part (i): An 8th level chaotic good human cleric calls on their Deity to destroy an evil wizard's tower while the cleric is still inside the tower. The cleric is exceptionally earnest and sacrifices 6 levels of experience.

- Chance of being heard = 26%:
- +8% (for being eighth level);
- +18% (i.e. 6 x 3%) for sacrificing 6 levels (the cleric will therefore have XP equal to starting at 2nd level, with the causal loss in HP and other abilities). The human cleric also ages 30 years (6 x 5 years);

If the cleric instead sacrificed all 8 levels of experience, the chance of being heard would increase from 26% to 32% (and they would age 40 years).

Part (ii): On the assumption that the Deity hears the request, the DM needs to determine the Deity's reaction:

- Situational Modifier Total = +50% (which is added to the roll on the Deity's Reaction Table above):
- +10% as the Deity is good
- +20% as the Deity is chaotic
- +10% as the plea is good (fitting with the Deity's spiritual (i.e. good) ethos)
- +10% as the plea is chaotic (fitting with the Deity's legal (i.e. chaotic) ethos: i.e. the cleric is requesting the 'chaotic act' of destroying the tower while they are still inside of it)

Worked Example 2

Part (i): A 10th level neutral evil cleric/assassin (dual class human) calls on their Deity to save the adventuring party from a red dragon, the party being made up of mostly good characters including a paladin. The cleric/assassin sacrifices all 10 levels (i.e. 10 levels of cleric and 10 levels of assassin).

- Chance of being heard = 40%:
- +10% (for being 10th level)
- +30% for sacrificing the 10 experience levels (the character will therefore be 0 level and have 0 XP, with the causal loss in HP and other abilities).
- The human character will also age 50 years.

Part (ii): On the assumption that the Deity hears the character's request, the DM needs to determine the Deity's reaction.

- Modifier Total = -60% (which is added to the roll on the Deity's Reaction Table above):

- +0% as the Deity is evil
- -20% as the Deity is (legal) neutral
- -30% as the act appears to be good in nature (i.e. two steps away from evil)
- -10% the act is (probably) lawful (i.e. saving everyone, i.e. one step from (legal) neutral)

By contrast, if the same character chose to only save themselves (not the group) in their plea, then:

- Modifier Total = 0% (which is added to the roll on the Deity's Reaction Table above):
- +0% as the Deity is evil
- -20% as the Deity is (legal) neutral
- +10% as the act is evil (i.e. saving just themselves)
- +10%, on balance, this seems like a neutral (evil) act (but, it could be deemed a chaotic act)

Therefore, a neutral evil Deity would look more favorably on a request from a neutral evil character trying to save only themselves (i.e. +0%), than on a request to save the whole party which includes a paladin and other good characters in it (i.e. -60%)!

Gronn the Gruesome's Hunger Flail

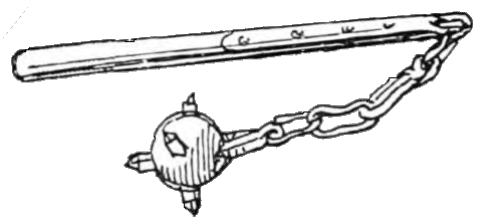
This flail has a +1 enchantment. When the natural 'to hit' roll required for a target is exceeded by 2 they must make a saving throw versus breath weapon. If they fail, the flail has "bitten" them and will drain 1d4+1 hp of blood per round thereafter. The user can choose to leave the flail in the victim or remove it at will. For every round of blood that the hunger flail drains, it will be at an additional +1 to hit for 1 turn after it is removed, to a maximum of +5.

In the second and succeeding rounds, a successful Bend Bar rolls will free the victim from the flail, but they will suffer damage that round.

A victim killed by a hunger flail may be raised, resurrected or reincarnated, but will take a 20% penalty on their system shock roll. Whenever a hunger flail successfully kills a victim with its draining ability there is a 1% chance that the flail will absorb the spirit of the victim and become sentient (randomly determine parameters like a magical sword). A hunger flail can be used by good aligned fighters, but paladins, good aligned cavaliers and rangers will shun the weapon.

Two-thirds are footman's flails (1-4 on d6) and the remainder are horsemen's flails, usable by fighters only.

GP value 15,000; XP value 1500



Halberd of Striking +1

This halberd is a +1 weapon in the hands of anyone other than a monk; for monks, the halberd is +3, and on any to hit roll that exceeds the needed roll by 5 (magical bonus included) the victim is stunned for a number of rounds equal to that for an open hand attack of a monk two levels below that of monk wielding the halberd. It also allows for a kill percentage roll with the same parameters as above.

GP value 12,000; XP value 1,500

Military Fork +1, "Devil's Horns"

The "Devil's Horns" is a +1 magical weapon for all but monks. For monks, the weapon is still +1, but it has the weapons vs AC adjustments of a halberd, a weapon speed of 5, and allows the monk to perform two special combat moves: vault and whirl. The monk can vault using the fork, striking victims with their feet, +2 to hit, +2 to damage (on top of magical bonus) and base damage equal to their hand-to-hand damage. They can also use this function of the fork to vault up to 20' up or 10' forwards. The monk can also whirl the fork for a regular attack, forcing all in a 5' radius to save versus paralysation or take regular fork damage.

GP value 12,000; XP value 1,500

by Ian Slater

Creature Feature I:
The Gilderlo Hippogriff

by Bryan Fazekas

A new take on an old monster

David of Kerr took a deep breath and grounded his sword. The extended bout of heavy spell casting intermixed with swordplay had taxed him to his limits. All the bugs near him were slain and he took the opportunity to catch his breath and suck at his water skin, wetting his parched throat.

Looking over the wall he saw thousands of crushed, hacked, and burned bug bodies. The dwarves held the walls, along with their elven and human allies. Casualties were high, but they held. By the skin of their teeth.

"How different things are from thirty minutes ago," he muttered to the air, thinking back ...

Thousands of the bugs had died trying to surmount the tall dwarven walls, but the dwarves and their allies beat back the first two waves. Casualties among the defenders were not high, but every defender who fell made them more vulnerable. Unlike in the epics where the defenders win with 90% of their manpower dead, in real life a loss of 5% was tragically significant.

The first wave was beaten back easily, like the bugs were throwing their puniest forces at the walls to determine strengths and weaknesses. After twenty minutes of battle the surviving bugs simply retreated, leaving their dead and wounded. There was no signal; they just all retreated at once.

An hour later another surge hit the wall. This one was more determined and focused, but still didn't seem serious, at least not in retrospect – at the time it was bloody serious. The attackers were still the smaller bugs, which were certainly large enough to kill a dwarf, elf, human, or even ogre-mage. Their claws could snip a wrist like scissors a flower stem. But this time there were flying bugs, cylindrical bodies with biting mandibles and stingers, supported in hard, iridescent wings. These bit and stung, and a few managed to grab a defender, lift them up, and drop them into the mass below the wall. The lucky ones died from the fall; the unlucky ones were shredded into tiny pieces and eaten.

Again, after twenty minutes the bugs retreated. Some dwarves jeered at them, but David knew something was wrong. The bugs didn't do things like normal creatures, but even by that standard this seemed wrong.

An hour after that retreat the bugs massed for the third assault. The previous numbers seemed overwhelming, but those assaults looked tiny in comparison. Larger bugs, ones with stingers, were visible for the first time, including three that were larger, slower, and more cumbersome. These three turned around and pointed their backsides toward the wall. Their rigid carapaces seemed to expand more and more, but at the distance beyond bow shot it was hard to be sure.

One rippled like the hard shell was cloth, and a ball of green energy spat from an orifice on its hindquarters. The energy flashed across the distance and hit the wall a hundred feet to David's right.

The burst of energy struck the wall, carving a seven foot diameter hole through the hard stone like it was soft butter. The burst continued on, hitting the inner wall with identical result. It punched holes through several buildings in the external city and continued on into the mountain and presumably into the internal city. Anything in its path was simply gone. Two buildings clipped by the energy collapsed. Screams echoed through the city.

As he turned his attention back, the other two energy bugs spat their energy blasts, punching two more holes in separate places. Following the discharge the bugs looked deflated, and slowly trundled away, while the masses around them charged. Flying bugs not previously seen filled the air.

The defenders held the outer wall while engineers frantically improvised patches in the breaches in the inner wall. The retreat was painful and expensive, and the battle for the inner wall was going badly for the defenders, individual feats of heroism too numerous to count.

David saw another wave of flying bugs coming at them from out of the sun. "*Damnation! We've got to hold long enough for the women and children to flee!*" He girded himself to sell his life as expensively as possible. He had

expended most of his spells and his stamina for a long fight against clawing, stinging bugs was not good.

Blinded by the sun he couldn't see the new attackers clearly, but he saw the packed wave of javelins that whispered down at the defending forces. "We're dead!" someone screamed.

The javelins twinkled in front of the wall, the force of the throws coupled with gravity, driving them through the rigid carapaces of the bugs, wounding or slaying hundreds, blunting their attack. A second salvo of javelins slammed through the bugs, driving climbers off the wall. The wounded dragged their compatriots with them, the fall wounding more than the javelins had.

"Hippogriffs!" David wondered aloud.

Wheeling by, the attackers – revealed to be hippogriffs with dwarven riders, slashed their way through the mass of flying bugs – beaks and hooves and spears fouling glistening wings, sending the bugs crashing to their deaths on the backs of their land bound brethren.

The bugs were faster and more maneuverable, but up close the hippogriffs inflicted far worse damage, and their riders were equally skilled with light spears that stabbed the bugs, fouling and destroying their wings before they could close. Some few of the hippogriffs and their riders fell to their deaths, though far fewer than the bugs that crashed down on their own.

The flying bugs killed or driven off, the air cavalry launched several more salvos of javelins into the mass of bugs beneath the walls, while the defenders dropped oil and torches, burning the dead and living alike. The assault broke, the stench of burning bodies a price willingly paid by the defenders in exchange for their lives.

"The Gilderlo Air Corps," breathed a voice next to David. Turning he saw his companion Gilden, the dwarf's axe gory with bug guts, his armor coated with it.

"It can't be – home is worlds away from here."

"Yet it's them, there's nothing else like them."

Down in the valley thousands of the gods damned things milled around. They were forming up for another assault on the walls.

The mage had heard stories of the Gilderlo Air Corps since he was a child, he'd seen them fly in formation, but he'd not seen them in battle. He watched as the squadrons formed and dove in waves toward the bugs. This was different from their last attack; they were far more spread out. More energy bugs turned their tails up into the air and fired the energy bursts they normally used to tunnel through stone. A hippogriff was hit, one of its wings disintegrated so it plummeted with its rider into the mass and they were ripped apart. But the wide-spread, fast-moving animals were hard to hit.

Puzzled, the mage watched the first salvo of javelins flashing downward as the hippogriffs pulled out of their dives. The first dozen hit large, widely separated bugs. Each javelin exploded into a fireball, but not like the spell. Each ball of fire was a torus, rolling out from the point of impact in an expanding donut more than man-high, burning everything in a huge circle. All the lesser bugs were burnt husks, but a few of the larger ones survived the magical fire. The next wave of javelins hit different groups of unburned bugs, scorching thousands more.

The third salvo of javelins was different – David watched in amazement and then glee as a javelin hit a depleted energy bug with a crackle of electricity, and a bolt of lightning leaped to a nearby bug, then to another and

another, hitting seven in addition to the first struck. The last energy bug had not fired its internal payload – it was still fat with the energy. It exploded in a sphere of green energy, scalloping out a 100' hemisphere in the ground, disintegrating everything near it.

David howled his appreciation, jumping up and down in circles. The nearby dwarves watched in stunned amazement as the bugs died. After long seconds they joined in the gleeful howling. The fight was long from being over, but the dwarves and their allies had turned the tide.

Author's Note: Some parts of the monster description are campaign-specific, and this is presented for flavoring. All details can and should be changed as needed to fit individual campaigns.

Hippogriff, Gilderlo

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	2d12
Armor Class:	4
Move:	18"/36" (MC: C)
Hit Dice:	4+4, 5+5, or 6+6
% in Lair:	30%
Treasure Type:	Q x5
No. Of Attacks:	3
Damage/Attack:	1d6/1d6/1d10 or 1d8/1d8/1d12 or 2d4/2d4/2d6
Special Attacks:	wing buffets (1d3/1d3 +special)
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Semi-
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	L
Level/XP Value:	4+4 HD: V / 300 + 6/hp 5+5 HD: V / 475 + 8/hp 6+6 HD: VI / 725 + 10/hp

At the time of the original Council of Rendelshod, the dwarven clan Gilderlo began raising hippogriffs as special mounts, breeding for size, strength, stamina, and intelligence. A thousand years of effort produced truly amazing results.

Normal hippogriffs are the size of a riding horse – the Gilderlo breed is significantly larger, the size of a heavy war horse or even larger. They can carry significantly larger loads and are more maneuverable with loads impossible to a normal hippogriff. While a normal hippogriff can carry loads up to 150 lbs, these can carry 200, 250, or even 300 lb loads. Note that carrying a maximum load is tiring and reduces their flight duration by 1/3 and reduces their maneuverability rating from C to D.

The intelligence of the breed is exceptional, with all at the high end of Semi-intelligent. Herd animals, they are fanatically loyal to their young, the herd, their trainers, and their riders. Gilderlo hippogriffs may bond tightly with an individual rider. Although they will permit other riders, they form a tight attachment and defend that rider as vigorously as they do their mate or offspring.

Note that the choice to allow a rider is exactly that – if a hippogriff takes exception to a person that person will not be permitted to ride. Forcing the choice on an unwilling hippogriff produces fatal results, such as dumping the rider at 3,000 feet.

Their intelligence can be as much a bane as a boon. While capable of understanding surprisingly complex things, they can be temperamental and will not suffer poor treatment. Their trainers and riders lavish affection upon them, possibly making them even more temperamental.

In the air the hippogriffs attack with two claws or a bite, equal chances for either form of attack. On the ground they attack with all three, and will also attack with wing buffets. Each wing buffet does relatively minor damage (1d3 hp each) but man-sized victims struck by a buffet must save vs. paralyzation or be knocked down and unable to attack the next round.

Gilderlo hippogriffs do not associate with normal hippogriffs; the latter are scrawny in comparison, less intelligent, and smell wrong. In return normal hippogriffs shy away from their larger brethren for similar reasons. While they are fully compatible the two strains will not breed.

The clan Gilderlo is zealously protective of its mounts, lavishing care upon them and guarding them with passion. The dwarves reject all attempts to buy them, although the clan has gifted neutered hippogriffs to very select allies.

But no breeding hippogriff is permitted outside the clan. Numerous attempts to steal one have been made over the centuries. The few successful thefts eventually failed as the thieves treated their captives as dumb animals, which they are not. While the other dwarven clans are not permitted hippogriffs any more than outsiders, they benefit from their protection, and in return the entire resources of all the clans converge on thieves. The old saying, "Fight one dwarf, fight them all" is never truer than in cases of theft. No one has long survived the attempt.

Gilderlo Air Corps

Formed at the same time the breeding program began, the Gilderlo Air Corps is an elite group of soldiers. The majority are of the clan Gilderlo, although applicants from other clans are accepted, as are a handful of applicants of other races. Non-dwarves must pass an extremely rigorous background check and mental examination. The mental framework of the applicants is considered more important than the physical.

Most potential candidates are eliminated in the initial screening. Fear of flying is the most typical reason – flying sounds fascinating but the reality is often too terrifying. Mental instability, inability to work cohesively in a diverse group, and lack of physical strength are other common reasons.

Of the candidates that pass the screening, there's still a 75% washout rate. The most common reason is a failure to establish rapport with the hippogriffs, although many find the rigors of the job, which include round-the-clock care of the hippogriffs, to be too much.

The final result is a tight-knit group of flyers. Most of them are fighters, with a small percentage of clerics and magic users, and rarely other classes.

New Magic Items

Gilderlo Fire Javelin

This magical javelin is +2 to-hit and damage. Upon a successful hit the javelin explodes into a donut-shaped Fireball, filling an area 10' high and 35' in radius. It inflicts 6d6 hit points of fire damage, and creatures in the area may save vs. Spells for half damage.

Gilderlo Lightning Javelin

This magical javelin is +2 to-hit and damage. Upon a successful hit the javelin inflicts an additional 8d6 hit points of electrical damage, and the victim is allowed a saving throw vs. Spells for half damage. A spark jumps to the nearest creature within 20', inflicting 7d6 hp of damage, and then again to the next for 6d6 hp of damage. The sparks continue in this fashion until the last, which inflicts 1d6 hp of damage. Each creature may save vs. Spells for half damage.

Krum's Leech

Once the beloved familiar of the famed hirudonist Lancel Krum, this giant leech is approximately 1' long and is kept in stasis in a cylindrical crystal case filled with enchanted brine. When removed from the case and placed on a host, the leech will attach and begin draining blood, and in the process, neutralize the effects of any prevailing poisons or diseases in the host body. To completely purify the host body takes 1 day, during which time the host will be drained of 1d4 hp.

After being utilised, the leech must be returned to its case to rest for one full day before it can be used again.

Each time the leech is used there is a 1% non-cumulative chance that the host will contract a virulent disease which will be fatal in 1d4+1 days unless magically cured. (Note: this transmitted disease cannot be cured by subsequent applications of the leech.)

GP value 17,500; XP value 2,000

by Dan Rasaiah

Creature Feature II: Spectral Hound and Weredog

by Andrew Hamilton

Spectral Hound

AKA Celestial Hound

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	7 to 16 (4+3d4), occasionally 1
Armor Class:	3
Move:	24"
Hit Dice:	4+6
% in Lair:	nil
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	3-8 (1d6+2)
Special Attacks:	see below
Special Defences:	see below
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Low
Alignment:	Lawful neutral
Size:	M
Level/XP Value:	V / 325 + 5 xp/hp

A "dog spirit" brought back from the Happy Hunting Grounds (or whatever afterlife good dogs go to), spectral hounds appear much as they did in life, although they are bigger and glow with a brilliant aura (illuminating everything within a 1" radius). This aura makes stealth effectively impossible.

Spectral hounds typically appear on the Prime Material Plane in response to a summons from a powerful cleric of ***Dog***, but they have been known to spontaneously appear to help a dog defend their human companion, or even return to assist the family they had in life. The appearance of spectral hounds is always accompanied by constant barking, howling and baying. While this should be annoying, it actually calms and heartens the spectral hounds allies and disheartens their foes (having an effect equal to a *Prayer* spell, with double bonuses to domestic dogs and a +25% morale bonus for allies and a 10% penalty for foes).

Spectral hounds may only be struck by +1 or better weapons, while they are able to affect foes normally harmed by +2 or better weapons. When biting, they are not subject to the "touch" effects of any target that they attack (e.g. biting a spectre or wight does not subject the spectral hounds to an energy drain effect.

A spectral hound may choose to forgo its attacks and instead radiate an aura of protection (equivalent to a *Protection from Evil 10' Radius* effect). A spectral hound will do this to protect an innocent, and sometimes one or more pack members will defend some humans, often children, while the rest of the pack drives off the threat.

Their supernatural nature provides spectral hounds with heightened senses, and they are able to track with a 110% base chance of success (subject to any situational modifications as described under the ranger's tracking ability, as per the *PHB*). They are also only surprised 1 in 6. While the spectral hound is unable to fly, their semi-corporeal nature allows them to run across water, snow, mud and similar terrain without slowing.

Evil clerics may turn spectral hounds as a "Special" creature.

Weredog

Frequency:	Very rare
No. Appearing:	3-12
Armor Class:	5
Move:	18"
Hit Dice:	4+1
% in Lair:	75%
Treasure Type:	B
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	2-8
Special Attacks:	see below
Special Defences:	see below
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Average
Alignment:	Lawful Neutral or Lawful Good
Size:	M
Level/XP Value:	IV / 250 xp + 5 xp/hp

The weredog is one of the rare strains of lycanthrope that can be good aligned, and is an ally of humanity. The weredog does not have a hybrid form, and their dog form shows a wide range of variation in "breed", but it is always large, bigger than one would expect for a dog (often approaching 200 lbs in weight). The weredog is a friendly and social creature, preferring to be in the company of people, dogs or other weredogs. They prefer to live in rural communities rather than large towns or cities, often working as shepherds or foresters (giving them the excuse to be away from home during full moons). They tend to choose professions which let them associate with dogs.

A fierce defender of humanity, when fighting alongside friends, allies, or loved ones the weredog strikes at +2 to hit & damage. However, if they are alone, they are less confident, and suffer a penalty of -1 to hit and damage.

Like all lycanthropes, the weredog is harmed only by silver or magical weapons, and they can spread lycanthropy through their bite (although they prefer to only infect willing friends and allies, and only in the most unusual cases; normally weredogs increase their number by having children).

Weredogs are very alert (surprised 1 in 6 in human form, and 1 in 12 in dog form). Weredogs are able to summon and control domesticated dogs (typically able to summon 3d4 dogs, but the number that respond to summons will depend upon the situation & environment) and are almost invariably (99% of the time) found in the company of one or more weredogs or dogs.

Eamonn's Rock

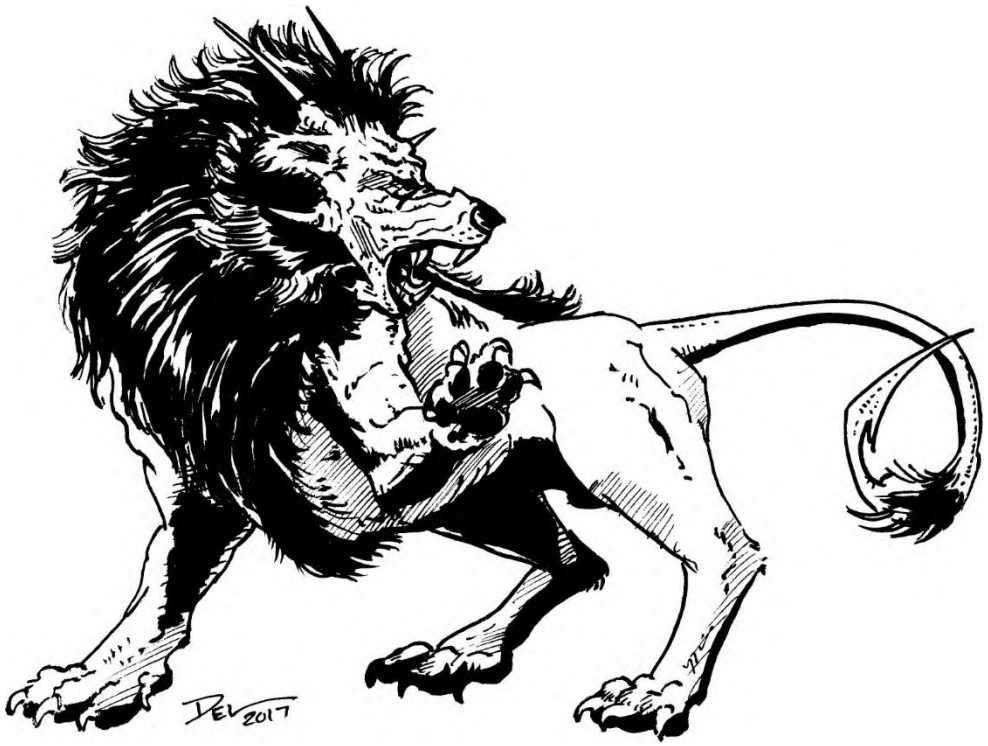
Modelled after a stone first enchanted by the druid Eamonn Aubrook, this fist sized rock weighs about 1 lb. However, the possessor can make the rock increase in size to 1 cubic foot and 200 lbs weight, and decrease in size back to 1 lb and fist sized at a command word. The rock has no magical properties, but is useful for holding something in position, keeping a door open, etc. Eamonn used a sack of these rocks, and his ability to shape change into an otter, to sink the boat carrying King Tyras the Tree-Burner across Lake Altus, causing the King to drown and plunging the Northern Baronies into a decade's long war and temporarily halting the spread of civilization.

GP value 1,200; XP value 200

by Andrew Hamilton

Creature Feature III: True Foo Dogs

by Bryan Fazekas



Trilla readied herself for the fight. She stood on the steps of the temple with the other Company members, watching the charging beasts of Elemental Chaos.

As with every other creature of Elemental Chaos, she had never seen anything quite like the onrushing beasts. Superficially they resembled the gorilla she had seen in the market, but the resemblance to that sad animal was cursory. These had grey skin and were hairless excepting a shock of long white hair that grew from the very top of their lopsided skull. Even at a distance the mania in their five uneven eyes was clear.

Based upon the doorways they passed, they were easily eight feet tall and she guessed they weighed in around four hundred pounds.

Behind her the little dogs were yapping frantically, but in anger, not fear. At six pounds each the little ones wouldn't even be a smear on the cobblestones when the attackers walked on them.

Trilla knew that she couldn't meet force with force so she moved down the steps, ready to use their own bulk and force against them. The others moved with her.

Rationally she knew she should be scared spitless ... but there was no fear, just a calm understanding of what she needed to do. The forces of Elemental Chaos would not pass her this evening.

The dogs yapped louder and she heard a curse from behind, where the temple guardsmen stood. She looked as the two yappy dogs leapt from the step, and impossibly long leap for animals so small.

In mid leap the yaps turned into roars and the dogs grew from tiny little rags into massive lionesque beasts. The first gorilla-thing didn't even slow the lion-like creature down as it bowled it over, raking it with razor claws as it went after its next foe.

The young woman lost track of the creatures in the haze of battle as she sidestepped a rushing foe and kicked, making its knee joint bend in a direction it was ill-equipped to move in. It roared until Gilden split its skull with his axe, ending its pain.

She moved on to her next foe.

After an eternity of battle that probably lasted all of a minute, the creatures of Elemental Chaos were all down,

dead. The lionesque creatures were gone, turned back into the little yappy dogs.

One of the dogs was also down, laying on its side with a badly torn rear hip. It whined pitifully. Its mate ran to Gilden, the dwarven cleric, tugging on his pants leg with its surprisingly sharp teeth.

Faraz tried to use healing magic on the hurt dog, but it snapped at him, keeping him at bay. "I don't understand, why won't it let me help it?" The druid sounded as if his feelings were hurt as well as bewildered. Animals tended to flock to him.

"Let me try," Gilden suggested. As a cleric of Cieldren he had access to powerful healing magic, the equal of the druid. He knelt by the small dog and called upon his god. The dog let him, sighing in relief as the surge of magic stopped the bleeding and restored ripped muscles.

"Why did she let you heal her but not me?" Faraz asked in a puzzled tone.

Gilden frowned as he looked up at his taller friend. "Hmmm. Cieldren is a god aligned with Law, but your Sylvanus is a god of neutrality. This is a beast of Elemental Law, so it wants nothing to do with you."

True Foo Dog

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	1d4+1
Armor Class:	6 / 0
Move:	6" / 24"
Hit Dice:	1 / 12
% in Lair:	75%
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	1 / 4
Damage/Attack:	1d3 / 2d8, 2d8, 2d6, 1d4
Special Attacks:	leap, roar
Special Defenses:	tail strike
Magic Resistance:	50%
Intelligence:	Animal / Semi-
Alignment:	LG
Size:	S (1') / L (9') long
Level/XP Value:	I / 1 HD: 10 + 1/hp X / 12 H7,925 + 17/hp

When initially encountered one of these strange creatures appears to be a small dog with a long coat of mixed gold and black fur. Adults are normally 5 to 7 lbs, and the dogs are typically bright and friendly, especially to lawful characters. They may be unfriendly or skittish with chaotic characters. Surprisingly enough, they tend to be ambivalent to druids, unlike natural animals which typically act friendly towards them.

Foo dogs are abnormally brave and will defend trusted companions against much larger foes, yapping, snarling, and biting with startling sharp teeth. They are much hardier and can bite with more damage than their size might otherwise indicate. They are startlingly quick, which gives them a better armor class than their size and combat ability imply.

Foo dogs are actually creatures of Elemental Law, the creation of ancient lawful powers designed to battle the forces of Elemental Chaos. The dogs increase in frequency when the forces of Elemental Chaos become prevalent, and diminish in number when Chaos retreats. It is unknown where they come from or where they go when no longer needed.

When faced with creatures of Elemental Chaos, the dogs rapidly grow in size from tiny to larger than a cave lion, weighing in at 1,200 lbs. This transition takes but 2 segments and is known to occur in mid-combat. At first glance a transformed foo dog appears to be a large, heavy-bodied lion. The head has some dragonish qualities, although it is definitely mammalian, not reptilian. Both males and females have a massive black mane with wiry golden fur covering the remainder of the body. The tail is similarly furred although it ends in a heavily pointed barb.

In combat they swat with their powerful claws and bite with their terrible jaws. The tail is not long enough to strike foes in front of them, but can strike enemies behind or beside them. It is not known how they detect foes behind them as the tail attack seems to happen independently of the foe they are fighting with their claws and jaws.

They may leap up to 50', lashing out with their claws against a single foe. This attack is performed at +2 to hit and if both claws hit the opponent is knocked flat and suffers an additional 1d10 hp of damage. Jaw and tail attacks may not be made in the same round as a leaping attack.

At the beginning of combat they may roar, a staggering sound that affects all non-lawful creatures -- neutral creatures save vs. Paralyzation at +2 or lose 1d4 segments of initiative. Chaotic creatures save vs. this effect at -2, and creatures of Elemental Chaos save at -4 and lose 2d4 segments of initiative.

When the forces of Elemental Chaos are destroyed or driven off, the foo dogs shrink back down to their normal size and become, for all intents and purposes, tiny dogs.

The dogs do not gain the transformation ability until reaching adulthood, which takes about one year. The

pups are as brave as the adults, but lack any effective attack ability.

Note: There are creatures of the Upper Outer Planes called Foo Dogs (see *AD&D Monster Manual II*). These creatures are not related, and some sages believe the Outer Planar creatures are a pale imitation produced by Goodly deities based upon legends of the real Foo Dogs.

What Are Elemental Law & Chaos?

The true origins are Elemental Law and Chaos are unknown, but sages theorize that when the multiverse was formed, regardless of its origin, the first two forces were in opposition: Creation and Entropy. Creation's focus was the building of things, of growth and expansion. Entropy's focus was the return of the multiverse to a static, unmoving state. In direct conflict with each other's fundamental goal, these two powers have battled since the very beginning of time. Possibly even before then.

In the course of time (if such a thing actually exists) both forces developed creatures of varying personal power, which carried on the battle on every imaginable playing field, and some incomprehensible to mortal creatures. The forces of Creation became known to mortal creatures as "Law", and the opposing group became known as "Chaos". [These are merely labels used by mortals to describe the indescribable.]

It must be noted that these two extremes are nothing mortal creatures can comprehend. Even the most powerful gods lack true understanding. Although Elemental Law is sometimes equated with Lawful Good, and Elemental Chaos is similarly likened to Chaotic Evil, neither comparison is rational.

Elemental Chaos seeks the end of everything. Even the most bizarre chaotic god appears sane in comparison. Mortals allying themselves with Elemental Chaos have a bad ending every … single ... time.

Elemental Law is equally dangerous. On the surface the mission is the preservation of life and the prevention of Elemental Chaos from achieving its ends. In reality Elemental Law can and will sacrifice any and every thing to the furtherance of its goal. Nothing and no one is sacred, no price is too high to pay to subvert the enemy.

In the campaign one side or the other will appear from some unknown place and resume its typical activities. Shortly thereafter the opposing force will contend with its ancient foe, in general leaving a swath of destruction in the wake of the battles. The forces will fight for a period of years, decades, or even centuries – then their strengths exhausted both will retire from the field, disappearing from the ken of mortal creatures.

In recent eons it is unclear if these forces are still interested in their original missions, or if they now simply contend with each other.

Author's Note: *the concept of Elemental Law and Chaos was, in part, inspired by Michael Moorcock's depictions of law and chaos, especially as presented in the Elric stories. When first reading the Elric saga as a teenager the idea that the gods honestly cared nothing for mortals was disheartening; as a much older adult it is the fodder for campaigns! Please note that Elemental Law and Chaos are the embodiment of Creation and Entropy, which is significantly different from Moorcock's ideas.*

Hunter's Arrows

These arrows a favorites of those who hunt big game. When used against animals (e.g., creatures with animal intelligence, no magical abilities, both normal and giant-sized) the arrow causes triple damage, including any bonuses from specialization, magical bow, or other sources.

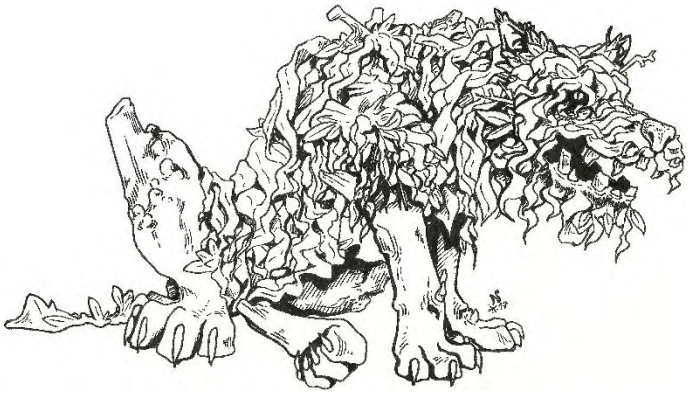
The arrow is +1 to-hit animals, but has no additional damage bonus. Against non-animal targets these arrows have no to-hit bonuses or special damage properties. Like all magical arrows they are single use items. While these items are typically associated with hunting, they were used to great effect by the Wardens of the Northern Reaches to decimate the Iron Hooves, the infamous Imperial heavy cavalry.

GP value 300; XP value 50

by Andrew Hamilton

Creature Feature IV: Who Let The Dogs Out?

by Dan Rasaiah



Shambling Hound

Frequency:	Rare
No. Appearing:	1d4
Armour Class:	0
Move:	9" // 3"
Hit Dice:	4-6
% in Lair:	30%
Treasure Type:	B
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	2d4
Special Attacks:	Maul
Special Defences:	See Below
Magic Resistance:	See below
Intelligence:	Low
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	M
Level/XP Value:	4 HD: V / 395 + 4/hp
	5 HD: VI / 510 + 5/hp
	6 HD: VI / 875 + 6/hp

These strange amalgams of wolfhound and shambling mound were created by Morag the Morai to patrol Keres Marsh. They have the resiliency of shambling mounds but are quicker and have some tracking ability courtesy of their hound ancestry.

Shambling hounds appear as four-legged heaps of rotting vegetation with a vague hound-like head filled with jagged teeth made of wood, bone, and other hard matter.

They attack with a shredding bite, and upon a successful hit, will continue to maul and inflict automatic damage on subsequent rounds unless the victim successfully makes a BBLG roll. Shambling hounds are immune to fire damage due to their wet and slimy nature, and sustain half damage (save for none) from cold attacks. Lightning causes them to grow (add 1 hit die) and all weapons only cause half damage due to the creature's durable, fibrous structure. They are able to flatten themselves and are therefore immune to crushing damage.

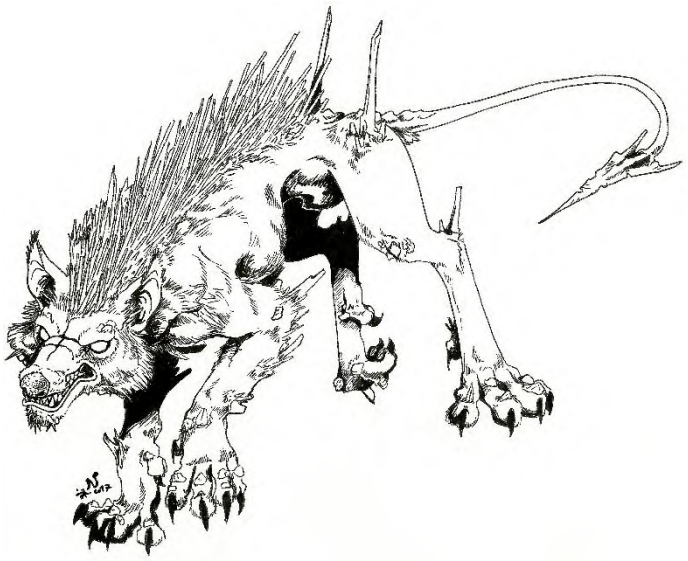
Shambling hounds are affected by spells that affect plants. Shambling hounds are able to swim at 3".

Vendyan Spike Wolf

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	2d6
Armour Class:	5
Move:	15"
Hit Dice:	3+3
% in Lair:	Nil
Treasure Type:	Nil
No. of Attacks:	2
Damage/Attack:	2d4 / 1d4+1
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defences:	Impalement
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Semi
Alignment:	Neutral evil
Size:	L
Level/XP Value:	III / 85 + 4/hp

These creatures resemble a dire wolf in shape and size, but are covered with sharp bony spikes similar to a hedgehog. They are thin-waisted, with thick powerful chests and shoulders, and are the colour of dark slate. Their tail ends in a sharp dagger-like spike, which they use to good in effect in combat alongside their vicious bite (1d4+1 and 2d4 hp damage respectively).

Any assailant engaged in melee with a spike wolf will be stabbed by 1d3 spikes per round they remain in melee range (assailants wielding long weapons such as spears or halberds will be outside the quills' range and take no damage) with each spike causing 1d4 hp damage. This is



in addition to the spike wolf's regular bite and tail attacks.

Spike wolves' favored foods are human and elvish flesh; however, they will eat any kind of humanoid, and even mundane animals if sufficiently hungry.

Spike wolf cubs are highly sought after by evil humanoids and intelligent monsters alike for they make formidable and loyal guardians when fed regularly with human or elvish meat.

Clone Wolf

Frequency:	Rare
No. Appearing:	1
Armour Class:	7
Move:	18"
Hit Dice:	5
% in Lair:	10%
Treasure Type:	B
No. of Attacks:	1 or 7
Damage/Attack:	1d4+1
Special Attacks:	See below
Special Defences:	See below
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Low
Alignment:	Chaotic evil
Size:	M
Level/XP Value:	VI / 525 + 8/hp

This fell creature appears as a scrawny, bloody wolf, for its skin secretes blood into its fur, making it appear wounded. It lurks near remote trails and camps where it feigns injury and uses its vocal abilities to lure in unsuspecting prey by loudly crying and whining, mimicking a dog or wolf in distress. Once prey is within melee range, the clone wolf will spring its trap, biting its victim while generating six spectral images of itself. By the beginning of the second round of combat these spectral images will have fully materialized (regardless of whether or not the clone wolf has sustained damage, there cannot be any interruption of this innate ability) appearing as identical clones of the original wolf, fake wounds and all. Each replica will attack independently as a 2+2HD monster, and can sustain 10 hit points damage before it collapses dead upon the ground (these hit points are independent of the clone wolf which is unaffected by replica deaths). The clone wolf attacks as a 5HD monster but otherwise is indiscernible from its replicas. If the clone wolf is slain, the replica wolves will instantly disappear, as their manifestation is bound to the life essence of the clone wolf. The clone wolf is able to shed its replicas once per day, for a maximum duration of 6 turns. Any replica slain will be fully 'regenerated' by the following day (i.e if a replica is slain but the clone wolf lives, the clone wolf may still shed 6 replicas the following day).

Githyanki Hound Golem

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	2d4
Armour Class:	4
Move:	12"
Hit Dice:	25 hit points (5+ HD)
% in Lair:	Nil
Treasure Type:	Nil

No. of Attacks: 1
Damage/Attack: 2d6
Special Attacks: See below
Special Defences: See below
Magic Resistance: Standard
Intelligence: Semi
Alignment: Neutral
Size: M
Level/XP Value: V / 500 + 6/hp

These constructs were initially created with the sole purpose of tracking and slaying mind flayers. The knowledge of their creation is a closely guarded secret among the githyanki, but sages speculate that the spells polymorph any object, geas, and various tracking enchantments specific to githyanki warlocks are used in their creation.

They appear as metallic bull mastiffs the colour of burnished bronze, although the exact material they are made of is an unknown alloy of githyanki make. They are designed with ears and tail 'cropped' and their eyes are made of translucent calcite crystal.

As constructs they are immune to the psionic powers of mind flayers (and of course being brainless nullifies mind flayer tentacle attacks) and gain a +2 bonus to all hit and damage rolls against mind flayers due to their imbued knowledge of flayer physiology and attack/defence patterns. They have the ability to magically track mind flayers within a 10" radius of their position, and as such will comprise the vanguard of any githyanki assault on mind flayer outposts. Additionally, they can see into the astral and ethereal planes.

Against regular foes, Gith hounds (as they are often termed) attack with a bite, and if commanded by their handlers to 'hold' or 'detain' enemies, have the equivalent of 18/00 STR for purposes of opposed strength checks.

Gith hounds are immune to weapons of less than +1 enchantment, and are immune to all forms of magic, save electrical spells which slow them as per the spell slow.

They have a movement rate of 72" on the astral plane.

Gith hounds obey the simple commands of their githyanki handlers (track, kill, stop, detain, etc.).

Inu-toza

Frequency: Rare
No. Appearing: 2d6
Armour Class: 3 (plate barding)
Move: 15"/15"
Hit Dice: 4+10
% in Lair: Nil
Treasure Type: Nil
No. of Attacks: 3
Damage/Attack: 1d4 / 1d4 / 2d4+8
Special Attacks: Crushing bite
Special Defences: See below
Magic Resistance: Standard
Intelligence: Low
Alignment: Lawful evil
Size: L
Level/XP Value: V / 320 + 5/hp

Inu-toza are the heavy-set lion-dog guardians of the Oni (ref. OA), and could well be the inspiration for the fierce temple statues found throughout the architecture of the eastern lands.

Their large blunt heads and bulging eyes suggest some affinity to Foo dogs, but whether they are an offshoot evolutionary branch, a magically created or modified breed, or a separate species is unknown.

Colors vary, from deep bottle green to 'dark Byzantium' purple and jet, with manes ranging from peacock blue to amethyst and lilac. Their forelegs are leonine and tipped with sharp hooked claws, but their squat muscular upper legs and bodies are more reminiscent of mastiffs from the fighting pits of some dingy city.

Their fanged mouths appear oversized, even relative to their massive bodies, and their necks bulge with powerful corded muscle.

The Inu-toza's bite is a crushing attack, with commensurate item saving throws required on a successful 'to-hit' roll.

Inu-toza can fly and can become invisible at will.

Whilst they are sometimes used for hunting, their primary role is guardianship, and they are only surprised on a 1 in d10 due to their preternatural senses.

Inu-toza both hate and fear Foo dogs and Foo lions, who attack them on sight.

Spell Caster's Paradise: Codex Maleficarum

by Dan Rasaiah

Evil guys need a break, too!

These scraps of paper are believed to be taken from the accursed tome known as the 'Codex Maleficarum', a legendary compilation of dark and heretical magics, collated by the demonic scribe Theebzul Torcorgomon. In accordance with the chaotic nature of its collator, the spells have no discernible categorization or organisation.

Author's Note: *As a DM, I've always been frustrated at the lack of 'bad guy' spells available in the AD&D books, particularly the clerical ones. There are only so many times you can have an evil high priest cast* Hold Person *or* Flame Strike *before you begin longing for something more.*

With that in mind, here are spells for your evil spell-caster arsenal, whether it be a witch, lich, Arcanodaemon, cultist or whatever villain you are terrorising your players with. It is worth pointing out that I don't run evil player campaigns, so these spells were only ever intended for DM usage. With that in mind, the power level may be marginally higher in some cases than commensurate spells in the PHB (Hey, PC's get enough advantages at the table - it's time for the monsters to get some love!). As always, modify them as necessary to fit the parameters of your campaign.

Rust and Rot

Level:	Cleric 7, Witch 7
Type:	Necromantic
Range:	6"
Duration:	Instantaneous
Area of Effect:	2"x2"
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	3 segments
Saving Throw:	See Below

By means of this powerful spell, the caster causes all metal in the area of effect to rapidly rust and creatures' flesh to rot away.

All metal within a 20'x20' area (including magical items such as armour, bracers, rings and weapons) will be destroyed unless it passes an item saving throw roll of 13 (11 for magical items, with commensurate bonuses for +1 or greater enchantment).

In addition to this effect, living creatures must successfully save versus Spells or contract a highly virulent disease whereby their flesh will rot from their bones at a rate of 1 hp/caster level per round, until the creature is dead, or a *Cure Disease* or *Heal* spell is applied to the affected.

The material component for this spell requires some preparation. A pound of the caster's flesh must be combined with the rusted dust remains of a magical weapon of minimum of +1 enchantment, and a branch from a violet fungi. The concoction is then reduced via infernal alchemy to a dust component sufficient for the casting of 1d4 *Rust and Rot* spells (a pinch of this dust is thrown in the general direction of the area of effect when casting the spell.

The arduous process of procuring 1 pound of one's own flesh will age the caster by 1d10 years.

Devilskin

Level:	Cleric 6
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	Self
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of Effect:	Self
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	6 segments
Saving Throw:	None

By means of this spell the diabolist momentarily gains the defensive resistances of a Greater Devil. They will sustain no damage from fire (normal or magical) or non-magical weapons, and will sustain half damage from cold and gas (save for 1/4, regular and magical).

The material component for this spell is a small piece of Greater devil skin, which must be ingested by the caster.

Demonskin

Level:	Cleric 5
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	Self

Duration: 1 round/level
Area of Effect: Self
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 5 segments
Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell the demonologist momentarily gains the defensive resistances of a minor demon. They will sustain only half damage from cold, electricity, fire, and gas (save for 1/4 damage, whether regular or magical).

The material component for this spell is a small piece of skin from a minor demon, which is ingested on casting.

Fleshpuppet

Level: Cleric 5
Type: Necromantic
Range: 10"
Duration: 1 round/level
Area of Effect: One creature
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 5 segments
Saving Throw: Negates

To cast this evil dweomer, the caster must have previously fashioned a forearm-length glove of humanoid skin, which he/she thrusts his/her hand into, and holds aloft invoking dark, unnatural energies. One humanoid may be targeted within the spell's range, who if they fail a saving throw versus spells becomes as a living hand-puppet under the caster's control. The caster gains control over their body but not their mind, so no spells or cerebral action can be undertaken by the 'possessed' at the whim of the caster. All physical actions, however, including suicidal ones, can be directed for the spell's duration, as the caster mimics the controlled's movements with their skin-encased, puppeteering hand.

Ghoul Hunger

Level: Cleric 5
Type: Necromantic
Range: 6"
Duration: 1 round/level
Area of Effect: 3"x3"
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 5 segments
Saving Throw: Negates

This nefarious spell causes all affected creatures in the area of effect to be overcome with a ghoulish hunger for living flesh for the spell's duration (saving throw versus spells negates). Creatures affected in such a way will frenziedly bite the nearest living victim (prioritizing humanoids first, animals second, and themselves third) causing 1 hp damage on a successful attack plus 1/3 their normal strength damage bonus rounded down (i.e., 18/00 strength would get a +2 damage bonus, whilst 18/51-75 would get +1). They will continually bite and devour the assailed target until it is slain at which time they will feast on its corpse. They may perform no other action for the spell's duration.

The material component for this spell is small piece of ghoul or ghast flesh which is ingested on casting.

Apostate

Level: Cleric 5
Type: Abjuration
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 hour/caster level
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 5 segments
Saving Throw: Negates

By means of this dark power, the casting cleric may completely deprive one devout creature of its spiritual connection to its deity (a successful saving throw versus Spells at -4 negates). If unleashed upon a cleric (or paladin) the victim will lose all spell casting ability, turning ability, and must roll equal to or under their wisdom on 3d6 or be struck insane from the sudden shock of spiritual disconnection, as a yawning black chasm of loneliness arises in their soul.

Only a *Heal*, *Restoration* or a *Wish* spell will restore the spiritual connection to the cleric/paladin prior to the spell's expiration. If a character is struck insane, at the end of the spell they must make a saving throw vs. Spells else the insanity is permanent (but may be cured by normal means).

The material component for this spell is the evil cleric's holy symbol.

Luck of the Left Path

Level:	Witch 5
Type:	Abjuration
Range:	3"
Duration:	1 turn + 1 turn/level
Area of Effect:	1 creature
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5 segments
Saving Throw:	Negates

By means of this curse, the witch imparts a sense of self-destructive contrariness in a single target creature, which manifests as extreme bad luck. The creature suffers a -3 penalty to all to-hit rolls, and will always hit for minimum damage. Similarly, spells involving healing or damage will always result in the minimum effect (e.g., a *Cure Light Wounds* spells would only heal 1 hp, a *Fireball* spell would only deliver 1 hp damage per die). Furthermore, all saving throws will be failed for the spell's duration.

In situations of non-combat, the affected will always take the path or make the choice that will lead to the most immediate negative outcome for themselves. The DM will need to adjudicate this: for example "you come to a cross road, and feel an overwhelming sense that the left hand path is the right way" or "nothing on the menu looks particularly appetizing save for the fish of the day, which sounds delicious".

The afflicted creature will be oblivious to their sudden spate of 'bad luck' but to attentive companions and friends, it should become obvious after a time that something is amiss with their friend.

The material component for this spell is the withered left hand of a humanoid who has died in an accident.

A *Heal* or *Restoration* spell is required to counteract the effects of this spell prior to its natural duration.

Iron Maiden

Level:	Cleric 4, Witch 4
Type:	Alteration
Range:	4"
Duration:	1 round/level
Area of Effect:	1 creature/5 levels
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	4 segments
Saving Throw:	Negates

This spell can only be cast upon creatures wearing plate mail, field plate, or full plate armour, with a successful saving throw versus spells negating the effect. The dweomer creates sharp spikes on the inside of the affected creature's armour, momentarily transforming their protective shell into a closed iron maiden torture device. Affected creatures will suffer 1d4 hp per round whilst they remain completely stationary. Mild movement, such as slow walking or attempting to remove the armour, will cause 3d6 hp damage per round of action. Any sudden or drastic movement, such as attempting to attack, defend, run, jump etc. will drive the sharp spikes into every part of the victim's body, causing 6d6 hp damage per round, and necessitating a saving throw versus death to avoid being instantly slain from the protruding spikes.

The material component for this spell is an iron spike.

Slugspit

Level:	Cleric 3, Witch 3
Type:	Evocation
Range:	6"
Duration:	1 round/3 levels
Area of Effect:	Creature targeted
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	3 segments
Saving Throw:	1/2

This spell enables the witch to spit forth an acidic globule once per round at a target in range, hitting unerringly, and causing 1d12 hp damage (save for half) with a failed save necessitating item saving throws to be made. On the second round, a struck creature will suffer 1d6 hp (save for half) from the residual acid burn. **Note:** No spell casting may be employed during this time.

The material component for this spell is a small vial of giant slug acid, which is ingested by the caster, causing 1d4 hp damage in the process.

Witch's Graft

Level:	Cleric 5, Witch 5
Type:	Alteration
Range:	5"
Duration:	Permanent
Area of Effect:	2 creatures
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5 segments
Saving Throw:	Negates

This nefarious spell will graft two nearby humanoid creatures of ogre size or smaller into one conjoined creature (with a successful saving throw from either creature negating the effects of the spell). The new creature will have both heads, an amalgam of their two torsos, and one arm and leg from each individual (the positioning of each creature at the time of casting will dictate which one has the right hand and leg and which the left).

The process is painful, reducing each creature to half of their hit points at the time of casting, and once conjoined, the pair will be disorientated for 2d4 rounds during which time they cannot perform any actions. Once this disorientating period is over, each half of the new creature must attempt an opposed mind roll each round to see which brain controls the actions of the overall organism (each creature rolls 1d20 and adds their combined INT and WIS score with the higher score winning control for the round). The new organism is unwieldy, incurs a -2 penalty to all combat rolls, and requires a successful saving throw versus spells prior to casting any spell (assuming the controlling mind at the time of casting is a spell caster).

After a period of one month, the conjoined creature will no longer suffer combat roll penalties nor require an opposed mind roll to determine actions, the organism now being effectively a unified, single creature.

Prior to one month elapsing, a *Dispel Magic* from a 12th level or higher cleric or magic-user will reverse the effects of a *Graft* spell. After that, only a *Restoration* or *Wish* spell will undo the effects.

The material component for this spell is a strand of ettin hair, which is blown in the general direction of the targeted creatures.

Meatshield

Level: Magic-User 4
Type: Charm
Range: 7"
Duration: 3 rounds +1 round/level
Area of Effect: 1 creature
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: Negates

This powerful charm effect will overcome one target creature with an overwhelming desire to protect the caster with their own body. The creature will have no thought for their own welfare for the spell's duration, gleefully placing themselves in harm's way to provide the maximum protection possible. During this period of protection, the caster is treated as being in 50% cover and concealment for all attacks from the front (i.e., gains a -4 AC bonus and a +2 bonus to saving throws). Additionally, any frontal melee attacker will be forced to deal with the 'meatshield' before confronting the caster; failure to do so will result in an 'attack of opportunity' by the 'meatshield' per round.

The protecting 'meatshield' creature is unaffected by fear and will never check for morale whilst under the effects of this spell.

The material component for this spell is a lock of a fighter's hair.

Beloved of the Underworld

Level: Cleric 7, Witch 7
Type: Abjuration / Necromantic
Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: None

When the witch or cleric places their mark upon the target creature (to-hit roll required) they are cursed with a powerful hex. The cursed will carry the mark permanently (visible only to other witches or clerics of the Underworld) with a *Restoration* or *Wish* spell required to remove it. Whilst marked with the hex, the cursed will automatically fail any saving throw versus death magic, and will be targeted by any undead or negative plane creature, with double the regular chance of encountering such creatures. Additionally, should the 'hexed' ever be slain (by any means) and subsequently raised from the dead or resurrected, they do not return alone … the powers of the underworld refuse to relinquish their prize without a fight; the newly arisen returns accompanied by a Major Death (AC -8, hp 66, strikes with a giant scythe for 4d8 hit points, never missing, always striking first in a round, standard undead immunities plus immune to cold/fire/electricity). The Major Death will seek to slay the raised creature as well as the raising cleric, and all nearby companions. The gods of the underworld will take back what is theirs … with interest!

The powers of Thanatos will bestow boons upon witches and clerics who utilize this spell, with the boon materializing upon the death of the cursed, and in proportion to the deceased's power.

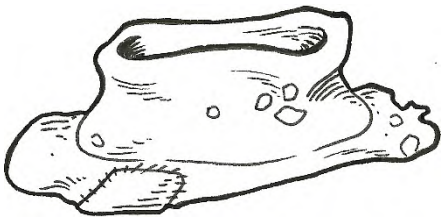
Toy Box I:
A Plethora of Ideas

by David "Garhkal" Stairs

Hat of Difference

This is a full re-write of the Unearthed Arcana *(UA)* ***Hat of Difference****, clearing up a lot of confusion surrounding the initial* UA *write up.*

The **Hat of Difference** is a strange magical device looking like any normal hat for whatever campaign milieu is in use. When it is donned, it allows the wearer to assume the role of any other profession that the hat is keyed to (Profession here, meaning class!). The character *class* assigned by the hat lets them become 1st level in that new class and so long as it is worn, any acts performed give XP and all normal training / leveling rules are in play, so a hat kept in someone's possession could eventually hit name levels and so on.



To actually benefit from it though, one must still adhere to racial-class and alignment restrictions, so a NG human could not don it and become a paladin or assassin, and they must also meet any class requirements (ability score) needed. For example, if your wisdom is less than 9, you can't become a cleric, even by using the hat, though this does NOT apply for specialist mages: one just needs to be the core mage class to benefit. Deity issues though are NOT a concern in regards to which god you take if you use the hat to become a cleric, since it is tied to the god(dess) of magic. If the hat *'gives*' a class which has numerical restrictions on certain levels *(Monk, Druid, Bard, Assassin)*, to where once those limits are hit one normally would challenge for a level, those issues are **not in effect**, as the hat's class is not truly part of the rank structure. However, hard level caps (assassin 14, monk 17, druid 16) do still come into play. At no time can a hat giving druid levels allow someone to become a hierophant druid.

While you are the new class(es), your HP / HD and ability scores are as per your **CORE** class, but your THAC0, saving throws, Weapon and Non-weapon proficiencies are as per the 'assumed' class. You still roll for HP based on the worn hat's newly assigned class, but until (and unless) it surpasses the core class's HP tally, they are simply not used. Same goes for THAC0 and Saving throws.

You gain the new class's abilities based on skill/level, but still need to possess the gear the class requires/needs such as a spell book (for mages), or holy symbol, weapons and armor (cleric). If the hat is for a spellcasting class, the wearer still needs to abide by the spell memorization rules for that class.

If you take off the hat, you immediately revert back to your core/initial class, and any memorized spells you may have had as the assumed class are wiped. Any earned XP to that assumed class stays unless the item is lost, discarded, stolen or destroyed, or the character is away from it by more than 1 mile for more than 24 hours.

When found a hat is keyed to a specific class or potentially more than one class. When wearing these "more than one class hats", the wearer has to select which class is active for THAT duration of wearing it. He can spend an entire round switching the 'active class' but gets NO actions (other than dodges) during this time, though does lose any dexterity bonuses due to standing still, that he would enjoy for his Armor class or on his saving throws (if his dexterity is high enough). If the character possesses more than one hat, he can switch between hats (also taking 1 round to do so). If a hat links to a spell casting class, and that is the 'active class', he must spend time memorizing any spells. Any spells so memorized, stay linked to the hat until cast (as if he was that class). Removing the hat with spells not cast, does not wipe them from the hat unless more than 1 full week passes.

If the hat gives the Psionisist class, the # of sciences/devotions are selected as if the character was advancing in that class and does not change if removed and replaced.

First roll on the Number of Classes table to determine the number of classes bestowed by the hat, then on the

Classes table to determine the classes bestowed. **Note:** when rolling for more than one class, re-roll duplicates and any choices that have alignment conflicts, e.g., ranger-assassin or paladin-druid.

Number of Classes table

1d10	# Classes
1-5	1 class
6-8	2 classes
9-10	3 classes

Classes table

d00	Class
1-12	Fighter
13-18	Paladin
19-23	Ranger
26-39	Mage
40-46	Illusionist *
47-59	Cleric
60-66	Druid
67-81	Thief
82-89	Bard
90-95	Assassin **
96-00	Monk

* for 2E substitute Specialist Mage for Illusionist, roll on Specialist Mage table.

** for 2E substitute Psionisist for Assassin

If a wearer of a hat is targeted by energy drains, they first come off the hat, and if it's ever reduced to 0 level it is rendered non-magical. Further drains will transfer to the core class levels of the wearer. For instance, a level 7 fighter (core class) is wearing the hat and is now a level 3 mage, then gets hit by a spectre twice, losing 4 levels. His mage levels from the hat go away rendering the hat no longer magical, and he loses one level in his fighter class.

Specialist Mage table

2d10-1	Mage Specialist
1	Wild mage (Tome of Magic)
2	Transmuter
3	Illusionist
4	Invoker
5	Diviner
6	Abjurer
7	Conjurer
8	Enchanter
9	Necromancer
10	Song mage
11	Earth Elementalist (TOM)
12	Fire Elementalist (TOM)
13	Air Elementalist (TOM)
14	Water Elementalist (TOM)
15	Force mage (spells and magic)
16	Dimensionalist (S&M)
17	Shadow mage (S&M)
18	Defiler (S&M/Dark sun)
19	Preserver (S&M/DS)

While wearing the hat, the character is NOT considered a "Dual class" or "Multi-class" character, but single-class in whatever the class of the hat is. This also means that his weapon/armor allowance is per that class for as long as the hat is worn. While worn, magical items allowed are based on the class given by the hat, including magical tomes/librams/books and manuals.

This hat can be a boon to smaller groups of adventurers as it can allow someone to fill more than one needed role, but moral/alignment/deity based restrictions can be an issue, such as if a paladin has the hat, becoming a mage for all intents and purposes, he still needs to keep his initial class's ethics in consideration with what he does.

GP value: 5,000; XP value: 2,000

Dragon Rings

*This article contains detailed information on **Dragon Rings**, a potent new magical item similar in vein to **Dragon Orb** artifacts in* Dragonlance.

These very potent, and always unique looking rings come in all shapes, sizes (they do NOT re-size unlike regular magical rings) and appearances, from big 'African tribal neck rings', to ornamental minotaur nose rings, to classy ear rings. But they have one thing in common: they are often decked out in dragon artwork.

When found, they need to spend 30 days worn before they become attuned to the wearer but once that happens, it grants said wearer the following abilities:

- +3 to saving throws versus breath weapon/magical innate powers or spells cast by the dragon of the ring's age and color type.
- +2 to the saving throws versus all other aged dragons of the same color
- +1 to saving throws versus all other colored dragons of the same Age group.

The wearer can also sacrifice his own life force into the ring (coating it with his own blood equal to 1d4hp +1 per age of the dragon the ring is for, which can ONLY be healed via bed rest, not magic). This allows the wearer of the ring to shapeshift (as per the 4th level spell *Polymorph Self*) into a dragon of the same color/age the ring is for. This gives flight, movement, physical combat abilities and even the breath weapon of said dragon, but does not give any spell-casting ability, special resistances/powers or innate abilities such as breathing underwater or dragon fear aura.

This shift lasts for 2d4 turns, and can be used as often as the wearer wishes as long as he or she is willing to sacrifice HP into the ring to do so each and every time.

When located, roll 2d12-1 to generate a 1-23 number to find the Color of the dragon the ring is attuned to, followed by a d12 to determine the age category.

Dragon rings provide their saving throw bonuses regardless of the wielder's alignment. However, using the shifting power requires an alignment identical to the dragon type, except for wearers with Neutral in their alignment. They can use rings with the NON neutral side of their alignment (So an LN PC can use a ring for LE, LN or LG dragons). Attempting to shift into an opposed-alignment dragon (say a CG character trying to shift into a NG dragon) the hit points 'sacrificed' are lost, the shape shift fails, and they need to make a saving throw to minimize additional damage. When taking this damage, it is considered appropriate to the dragon type the ring is linked to (so acid for black, fire for red and gold and so on) and deals 2D6 points, with a save vs death magic reducing this to 1d6. All dragons bar copper, mercury,

Type of Dragon

2d12-1	Dragon
1	Amethyst
2	Black
3	Blue
4	Brass
5	Bronze
6	Brown
7	Cloud
8	Copper
9	Crystal
10	Deep
11	Emerald
12	Gold
13	Green
14	Mercury
15	Mist
16	Red
17	Sapphire
18	Shadow
19	Silver
20	Steel
21	Topaz
22	White
23	Yellow

Age Category

1d12	Age
1	Hatchling
2	Very Young
3	Young
4	Juvenile
5	Young Adult
6	Adult
7	Mature Adult
8	Old
9	Very Old
10	Venerable
11	Wyrm
12	Great Wyrm

shadow, silver and bronze deal out this damage. For those 5 types, see below for specific effects they cause.

If they try to shift into the dragon a 2nd time then the damage ramps UP as shown below with the exception of copper, mercury, shadow, silver and bronze. See below for their effects.

- Black and Brown– 18 hp acid damage
- Blue – 24 hp lightning damage
- Brass and mist – 18 hp heat damage
- Deep – 24 hp corrosive (flesh) damage
- Gold/Red – 30 hp fire damage
- Green – 20 hp gas damage
- White – 18 hp cold damage
- For the gem types– 22 hp shrapnel damage (Glass shard like)
- Yellow – 24 hp scorching air and sand damage
- Steel – 30 hp gas damage
- Cloud – 22 hp ice damage

Copper dragons cause those attempting to shift into the form of one to be slowed for 1d6 rounds (save for only 1d3 rounds).

Brass dragons cause a sort of aversion-like effect, forcing the ring wearer to drop the ring and move away for 3+d3 rounds (no save to avoid).

Shadow dragons and Mercury dragons are similar to Copper, but the effect is a temporary blindness for 4 to 6 rounds, Silver dragons cause are paralysis for 4 to 6 rounds. (Save for only 1d3+3 rounds.)

If someone tries it a 3rd time, the damage is the same as above for all those causing damage, and the effects for brass and mercury dragons is the same as before. Shadow dragons cause the loss of one life level as if the target had been hit by a wight.

Silver dragon rings increase the paralysis to 4d4 turns, while

Copper dragons change the slow to a knock out effect for 3d4 hours.

GP value 12,000; XP value 2,500 (all rings)

Magical Ammunition

This article contains a bunch of new magical ammunition for bow, crossbow and sling users all over. They are written more for 2E in mind, but can easily be used in 1E games.

Arrows

Of the below types of arrows, all are sheaf except for the Confusion and Sticking variants. Those come in both Flight (45%) and Sheaf (55%) models

Flight arrows are generally smaller/shorter than Sheaf arrows (often also called war arrows). Short bows (and composite short bows) can only use the smaller flight arrows, which deal d6/d6 damage as per the 1e *PHB*. 2E adds the alternate ammo type, the Sheaf arrow which can only be used by Long bows (and composite long bows), which deal normally d8/d8 damage.

With the exception of **Immolation** arrows, all the above are usually found in bunches of 2d4. The **Immolation** version come in a smaller bunch of 1d3.
Many of the arrows are written specifically for sheaf arrows using the d4+4 instead of d8 for damage. For flight variants go with d3+3 instead of their normal d6.

Arrows of Burning

These crimson looking sheaf arrows cause only 1d4 points of impact damage, instead of the normal 1d8, but an additional 4 points of damage come in the way of a flame burst on the point of impact, which can also hit others as it 'blows up' on all in 5 feet of the impact point. Because of this, they can never be reused. If these (or the shocking/chilling arrows miss, roll on grenade like missile chart in the DMG to determine where they 'explode'. Enemies might still take some 'splash' damage cause of this. Since the arrow, hit or miss is consumed (no need to make a saving throw) it's a one use and done missile. So they can never be reused.

GP value 750; XP value 150 (1E games only)

Arrows of Chilling Waves

These pale ivory arrows work in a similar fashion to those of **Shocking** or **Burning**, in that those within 5 feet of the impact point are affected, but unlike them cause no extra damage. Instead those hit by the 'chilling waves' must save versus spell or be *Slowed* as per the spell for 4 rounds, or 2 if they make their saving throw.

GP value 1,000; XP value 250

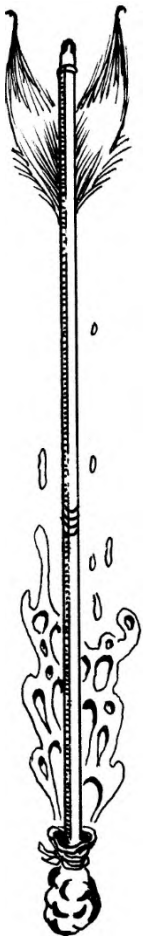
Sheaf Arrows of Shocking

Similar to **Arrows of Burning** they deal 1d4 damage from the physical impact, plus 4 points of electrical damage to those within 5 feet of the impact point.

GP value 750; XP value 150 (1E games only)

Sheaf Arrows of Immolation

These more potent variants of **Burning** arrows deal damage in a method similar to the **Javelin of Lightning** in that from the impact point, a 50-foot-long (5 feet at base, 20 feet at apex) cone of fire causes 5d8 points of fire damage to all in the cone. Once aflame the targets suffer 2d8 damage per round for 3 more rounds after impact. **Note:** if anyone carrying one of these arrows is hit by a fire attack and the item is NOT protected by being within an extra-dimensional space, and said owner fails his saving throw against that fire attack, the **Immolation** arrows must also make an item saving throw (vs magical fire as thin wood, needing a 15 to save) and on a failure, it explodes in his possession similar to a **Necklace of Missiles** or **Helm of Brilliance**.



GP value 4,000; XP value 1,000

Arrows of Sticking

These arrows cause no damage when they hit, but instead force the target to make a saving throw versus spell or be held as if by a *Hold Person* spell. If they make their saving throw, they are only slowed for the impact round and the following one. If they fail their saving throw they are held for 1d4+1 rounds.

GP value 1,500; XP value 400

Arrows of Confusion

These black arrows cause but 1 point of damage when they hit someone plus any bonuses from high strength (magic of a bow or specialization does NOT modify this). But any target hit must make an immediate saving throw versus spell or suffer the effects of a *Confusion* attack of the Umber Hulk for 3 rounds +1 per point of damage dealt.

GP value 1,000; XP value 250

Crossbow Bolts

Similar to most of the above arrows, these crossbow bolts are specified for whether they are usable by light, hand, heavy or medium crossbows.

Heavy Bolt of Scorching

This magical crossbow bolt is treated similarly to a **Javelin of Lightning**, in that once the bolt hits a target, it becomes the start of a cone of fire, dealing 1d3 hp of impact damage, and 3d4 fire damage to all within a 30ft cone. Those saving against spell only take 1/2 fire damage. In this they are similar to the Arrows of Immolation, but do NOT cause any continual burning damage. Also like immolation arrows, a holder of these crossbow bolts suffers if they ever fail a saving throw versus fire based magical attacks. Like Immolation arrows, if the user fails their save vs. magical fire/fireballs or dragon breath fire attacks, and the crossbow bolt then fails its save (needing the same 15 as above) it goes boom in the user's possession. When found they come in a specially made onyx case containing 1d4 bolts.

GP value 3,500; XP value 850

Frost Dome Light Bolts

These normal looking light crossbow bolts cause only 1 point of damage from impact, but summon forth a dome of ice similar to a *Wall of Ice* that is 4 inches thick and of sufficient size to trap the target hit by the bolt under the dome. As per the Wall of ice spell, breaking through this barrier causes 2 points of damage per inch gone through (in this case 8 points of damage). Breaking through a wall of ice (or a dome in this case) takes 3 rounds for those with a 15 or less strength, 2 rounds for those with 16 to 18/00 strength or 1 round for those with a 19 or greater strength. They are often found in batches of 2d4 bolts, but rarely are in any special wrapping or case.

GP value 1,200; XP value 400

Bolt of Smashing

This bolt causes only 1 point of damage, regardless of the crossbow fired from; however, once it hits, the victim's armor (if worn) must immediately make a special item saving throw or crumple to dust and shards at the end of the *following* round after getting hit. The saving throw is based on the type of crossbow the bolt is fired from.

- Hand crossbow causes leather/hide armors to save at a 12 or better, while any metal armor saves at a

14 or better. Studded leather counts as leather, but ring mail/chain mail/etc. counts as metal.

- Light crossbows are 13 and 15 respectively.
- Medium crossbows are 14 and 16 respectively.
- Heavy crossbows are 15 and 17 respectively.

Magical armors reduce that save value by only their magical + value, and gain no other bonuses from being magical.

When found, they are in a special ivory case, containing 1d8+1 (hand crossbow), 1d6+1 (light), 1d4+1 (medium) or 1d3 (heavy) bolts.

GP value 3,000; XP value 1,000

Light Bolts of Stinking

These magical bolts, when they hit, cause no damage but release a 20' diameter spray similar to the musk of a giant wolverine or skunk. All in the AOE must save vs poison or be retching and nauseated for 1d4 rounds, suffering a reduction in both strength and dexterity of 50%.

When found they come in batches of 3d4, and are always wrapped in an animal skin (skunk or wolverine).

GP value 1,000; XP value 250

Heavy Bolts of Tying

Similar to the **Rope of Entanglement**, this bolt is a non-lethal weapon, tying up one target as if they were the victim of the rope or a *Hold Person* spell. It keeps them in such a condition if they fail their saving throw against spell at a -2 penalty. This lasts for 1d6+1 rounds. For someone else to get you out, they need to cut the rope in exactly the same method as the Rope of Entanglement.

When found, they come in a batch of 1d6+2, and are often located in an oak case.

GP value 1,750; XP value 500

Blinding Bolts

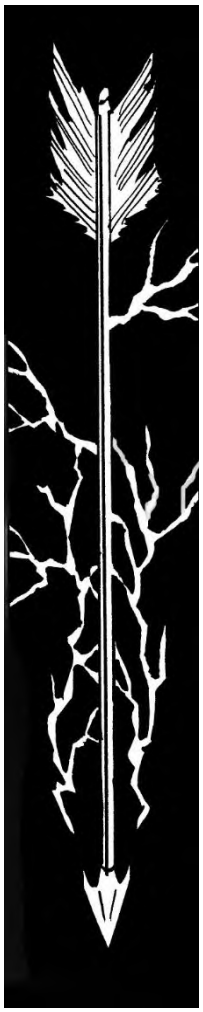
These magical bolts cause 1hp of damage (hand and light crossbows) or 2hp of damage (medium and heavy crossbows) from impact, but force all within a 15-foot radius of the target to make a saving throw versus spell or be blinded (2d6 rounds) from a massive flash of light. Misses are rolled on the 'grenade scatter chart to see where they ended up.

1d4+1 bolts are found per instance of this item coming up.

GP value 1,800; XP value 800

Heavy Bolts of Blasting

These heavy crossbow quarrels are magically enchanted such that upon impact they cause an explosion of sorts that damages all within 10' for the full 3 points of damage they dish out. They do no more nor less than 3 points. Misses are rolled on the 'grenade scatter chart to see where they ended up, and anyone in 10ft of that spot takes the damage.



Similar to **Blinding Bolts**, 1d4+1 are found per batch.

GP value 2,500; XP value 650

Tazer Bolts

These Light (50%) medium (30%) or heavy (20%) crossbow bolts are the bane of spell casters. Depending on the type of crossbow they are fired from, they deal 1 point of damage each round for 1d4+1 rounds (light bolts), 2d3+1 rounds (medium bolts), or 1d6+3 rounds (heavy bolts), coming in at an initiative score of 1d6 during the following rounds. This 1 point of damage is sufficient to spoil any attempts at spell casting and disrupts spells being maintained by concentration.

As with **Bolts of Tying**, 1d6+2 bolts are located per batch.

GP value 1,750; XP value 500

Sling Bullets and Stones

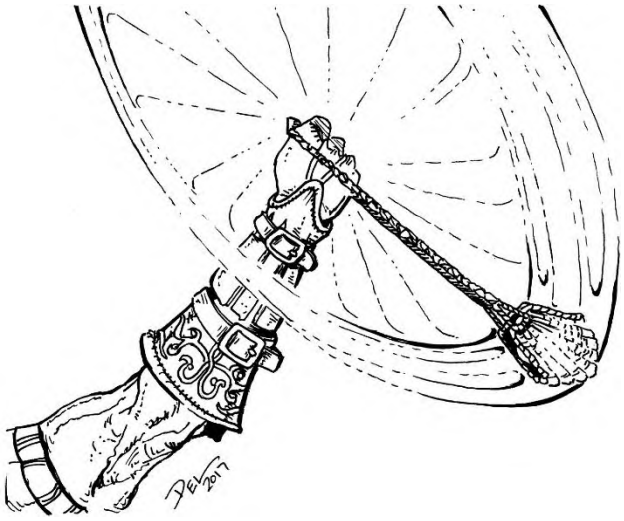
All of these can be used by slings or staff slings.

Sling Bullet of Magnetizing

These sling bullets, when striking a target wearing metallic armor, cause said armor to become magnetized. If the armor is magical, though, it gains a 50% chance to ignore this. Armor so magnetized becomes 'attractive' to other metals within 20' (and if lighter than that other object causes the wearer of the armor to go flying to it). So swords and other weapons held in the hands of nearby folk may get stuck onto the armor wearer

(potentially causing a hit: roll a standard THAC0 with NO modifiers that the wielder would otherwise have). Those wishing to try and hold onto their weapons need to make an opposed strength check, treating the armor as having a straight-out 18 strength. These come in lead-lined boxes, so as to not magnetize any metal objects around them before use.

GP value 1,000; XP value 350



Sling Stones of Stoning

These strange stones are single-use items, for once they are fired, they 'shift' in size to that of a boulder thrown as if by a giant. If they hit they do damage as per the giant type throwing them. Consult the below chart for what type of giant the stones are considered.

d00	Giant Type	Damage
01-45	Hill	2d8
46-70	Fire, Frost, Storm	2d10
71-95	Cloud	2d12
96-100	Reef	3d10

These stones, regardless of which 'giant type' they mimic, come in pouches of 2d6 stones.

GP value 2,000; XP value 300 – hill
GP value 2,500; XP value 400 – fire/frost/storm
GP value 3,000; XP value 500 – cloud
GP value 3,500; XP value 600 – reef

Sling Bullet of Blasting

This magical ammo causes no damage from impact, but acts as a *Shatter spell* cast by an 11th level mage on all items carried by the victim hit. Like all other magical ammunition, it is a one-use thing. Their only other magic causes all range penalties to be reduced by -1 at medium and -2 at long. Thus a long-range shot only has a penalty of -3 to hit versus the normal -5. They often come in small bags of 3d3 bullets.

GP value 1,000; XP value 350

Sling Stone of Mudding

This strange contraption is a normal-looking sling stone. But when a target is hit by it, they are affected as if they had been successfully hit by a mudman. If someone carrying these stones ever encounters mudmen, they will target him with all their attacks. The 'slowing effect' drops movement 1" per hit, till they hit 0. Once at that stage they will take 1d8 damage per round until their mouth and/or nose is cleared. When found, 3d3 stones will be found, often in a stomach-gut lined pouch.

GP value 1,000; XP value 350

Bullets of Slowing

These sling bullets cause only 1 point of damage when they hit, regardless of the user's strength, specialty etc., but when they strike, the target is *Slowed* for 1d6+1 rounds. Unlike the *Slow* spell (2E), there is no saving throw, but they also do not stack. Further stone hits only serve to reset the slow duration. Only 2d3 are found at any time.

GP value 1,200; XP value 400

Shut-Em-Up Bullets

These sling bullets carry a curse-like power, and as such don't actually deal damage. When a target is struck by the bullet, they must save vs spell at -2 or suffer a curse that causes 1 hp of damage per word spoken for 1d4 rounds. This damage though is only temporary, in that it heals at the rate of 2 hp per round of rest and silence. Similar to **Tazer Bolts**, this causes the individual hit to suffer the inability to cast spells, but unlike that one, it also prevents use of magic items that require a command word to activate.

When located, they are found in a holy-book looking container, with 3d6 per find.

GP value 800; XP value 500

Toy Box II:
New Weapons VIII – Siege Weaponry

by Nicole Massey

This time it's siege weaponry

Item	Ballista, Huge	Battering Ram, Heavy Mounted	Battering Ram, Medium Carried	Battering Ram, Medium Mounted	Battering Ram, Light Carried	Battering Ram, Light Mounted
Unit Size	Each	Each	Each	Each	Each	Each
Price	1,000 gp	200 gp	90 gp	160 gp	100 gp	180 gp
Encumbrance	2,000 gpw	2,000 gpw	1,000 gpw	1,500 gpw	625 gpw	1,250 gpw
Length	7'	20' – 30'	4'	10' to 15'	5'	5'
Width	3' to 5'	5' – 10'	3' to 6'	5' to 8'	3' to 6'	5' to 8'
HP/DP	1d2	1d4	1d2	1d3	1	1d2
Damage S-M / L	4d8 / 4d8	1d8+8 / 1d6+6	2d6 / 2d6	2d8 / 2d8	2d4 / 2d4	2d6 / 2d6
Rate Of Fire	1/5	1/2	1/3	1/2	1/3	1/2
Range (S)	21' – 150'	3'	3'	3'	3'	3'
Range (M)	151' – 300'	-	-	-	-	-
Range (L)	301' – 500'	-	-	-	-	-

Ballista, Huge: An extremely large crossbow, often carriage mounted, requiring a crew of at least five persons.

Battering Ram, Heavy Mounted: A very heavy weight or pole mounted into a frame and slammed into a solid object.

Battering Ram, Medium Carried: A very heavy weight or pole carried by hand by a group of people and slammed into a solid object

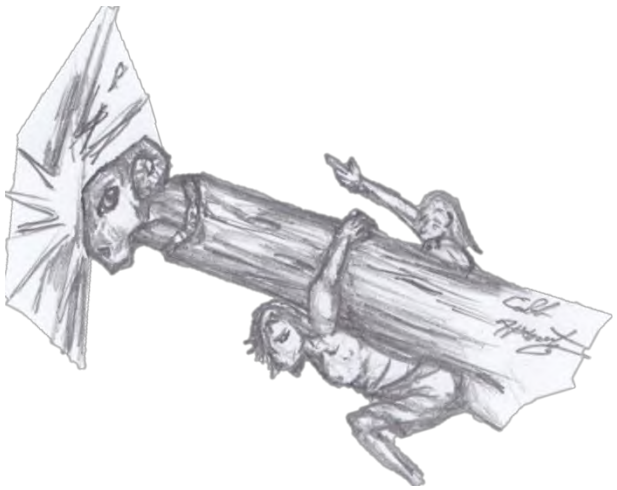
Battering Ram, Medium Mounted: A massive weight or pole mounted into a frame and slammed into a solid object.

Battering Ram, Light Carried: A heavy weight or pole carried by hand by a group of people and slammed into a solid object

Battering Ram, Light Mounted: A heavy weight or pole mounted into a frame and slammed into a solid object.

Siege weaponry requires a weapon proficiency to use, and they are by type – heavy crossbows like the ballista, scorpion, and arbalest make up one proficiency. Catapults and mangonels make up another, which also includes the trebuchet. Rams are a category of their own, but also include the use of a ram catcher in the skills covered. At least one person manning a siege weapon has to have this proficiency for use of the weapon – otherwise the lowest non-proficiency penalty applies to all attacks with the weapon.

Next time we finish our weapons series with a controversial topic – gunpowder based weapons. I know some folks balk at this, and that's understandable, but for those interested in using them in their campaign … I'll present them next time.



Domiciles & Emporia:
Uffe-Ukrit, Monster Hunter

by Bryan Fazekas

Bringing back the most bizarre creatures, alive!

"You are sure you can get me a pakpao?" the noble asked, his face displaying his doubt to the world.

Uffe-Ukrit smiled broadly, proudly showing his perfect teeth. "Of course I can! I never fail in a commission." The noble's wife tittered foolishly, her rapture at the man's good looks and presence making her foolish enough to display interest in front of her husband.

"Well … I've heard otherwise--"

"Nonsense. Anything you've heard about me failing is sour grapes from any of my competitors, who are simply jealous that I don't fail."

The woman tittered again. Her husband glanced askance at her.

* * *

"How are we set?" Uffe-Ukrit asked Ofrit, his lead hunter.

"We have three nets in place, and the ones manning them are high up in trees. The wizard cast the spells to mask their scent, so we are as ready as possible."

Uffe-Ukrit frowned. "Place the cub where we discussed and have the wizard wake it up from as far away as possible, downwind of it."

Note: *Names are local to the author's campaign.*

Uffe-Ukrit, Monster Hunter

Uffe-Ukrit (pronounced U-fee U-crit) is a human of Pahkian blood from the west coast, recently relocated to Sathea. He is a fifth-generation monster hunter; his grandfather's grandfather started the family business, which has passed down to each son in turn. There isn't a monster mentioned that he doesn't profess knowledge of, and to be fair, he almost always has his facts correct.

During the four years he has lived in Sathea he has delivered on every commission he accepted. He will kill or capture any typical monster, although he draws the line at anything from other planes, as well as dragons. He doesn't mess with dragons.

His prices are not cheap, but Uffe-Ukrit gets his monster. It should be noted that captures cost at least twice as much as killing, due to highly increased risks.

His employees tend to be loyal. While they work job-by-job, his pay scale is higher than anyone else's so he gets the best men. The work is risky, but he pays a death duty to the family of anyone killed on a commission.

In town he lives the good life. He's not ashamed of accepting a drink when offered, nor does he stint in buying for others. The man is tall for a Pahkian, nearly six and a half feet, he's powerfully built, and good looking to boot. While his facial features are typically Pahkian (broad with light bronze skin), his long blond hair is woven into an intricate pony tail, and the scar on his right cheek, stretching from near his eye to his jaw, enhances his appearance rather than detracting from it. Both men and women flock to him.

Uffe-Ukrit has an eye for the ladies and rarely is alone. He always engages with single women – he'll tell anyone who asks that monster hunters survive by not taking unnecessary risks, and married women are certainly that!

In addition to being strong, fit, and charismatic, the man is also reasonably intelligent. He can hold a discussion on most topics and doesn't brag too much except on the topic of monsters. He is in his late 30's, and his skin has the weathering of a man who spends a great deal of time outdoors.

Fighter Level 6; hp 60; Str 18/10; Int 12; Wis 10; Dex 14; Con 17; Cha 16; Com 15; alignment NE; AC 0; # Att 1; D/A varies (see below). XP value 1,555.

Uffe-Ukfrit has acquired a variety of magic items during his career. He doesn't wear armor; instead he has a set of **Bracers of Defense AC 3**, a **Cloak of the Wilderness +2** (see below), and a **Ring of the Wilderness +1** (see below). He always carries a **Dagger +2** and in the field carries a **Short Sword +4 Defender**. It's typical for him to carry at

least two potions, one of which is a **Potion of Extra Healing** and the other a **Potion of Invisibility**.

His base damage to-hit and damage is +1/+3 due to strength. When defending himself with his **Dagger +2** he is +3 to hit and +5 damage. When fighting with the sword he uses the defensive capability of the **Short Sword +4 Defender** based upon his opinion of his situation. If he thinks he has the advantage he will keep the pluses to-hit and damage. Conversely if he believes himself outclassed, or maybe just evenly matched, he will use the sword to bolster his armor class.

Uffe-Ukrit is not a coward, but he takes no unnecessary risks, especially when in the field. His father and grandfather both died relatively young, due to (in his opinion) mistakes made by others. When his father was torn apart by a hawkwolf right in front of him, he shakily decided that would not be his fate.

Since taking over the family business from his deceased father, Uffe-Ukrit takes no chances with his personal safety; he plans each commission with care. His plans are always designed to complete the commission with as little risk to the men as possible – and with no risk to himself. He pays others to take the risks.

However, as the decades have passed and his living expenses have increased, he has taken increasingly riskier commissions. In the past he turned down jobs for which the risks outweighed the payoff … but since coming to Sathea he turns down very few, although the fees are proportionately higher.

A portion of the extra fees are passed to his men. He expects complete loyalty from them, and his pay scale helps ensure that. His reputation guarantees that men want to work for him, and he selects only the best.

That is the public perception of the man. Privately? He will succeed at all costs excepting risk to himself, and towards that end he will sacrifice anything. He **will** complete each and every commission.

Other than his lead hunter, most of the men he has hired in recent years are loners with no family. He always pays the promised death bounty to the family of anyone killed in his service – if they have a family. If they don't there is no one to pay, nor does he owe the deceased any wages.

Uffe-Ukrit is not a gracious winner. He has been challenged to duels in the city several times for various reasons. While he prefers to defuse the situation, if pressed he will choose a non-lethal combat, favoring wrestling. It produces less risk to himself and avoids having an angry family wanting revenge.

When he wins, which is most of the time, he often humiliates his opponent in any way possible. While this seems out of character for him, he has admitted that he does it to encourage others to not challenge him.

On the rare occasion he loses he is publicly a gracious loser … but less so in private. Much less so. It has been noted that his victorious opponents always leave the city suddenly, often with no warning.

There was a rumor that Uffe-Ukrit made free with a powerful man's wife in whatever Pahkian city-state he came from. The rumor said he ran for his life, abandoning a wife and four children. The rumor circulated briefly but whoever started it apparently left Sathea abruptly.

Uffe-Ukrit has an eye for the ladies, and while he generally restricts himself to those who are unattached, he sometimes gets urges that are hard to fight, urges that conflict with his normal personal caution. He realizes that these urges will eventually get him in trouble yet again … so he keeps his reserve wealth in the form of small gems and is quite prepared to move on if he finds it necessary to continue his own well-being.

* * *

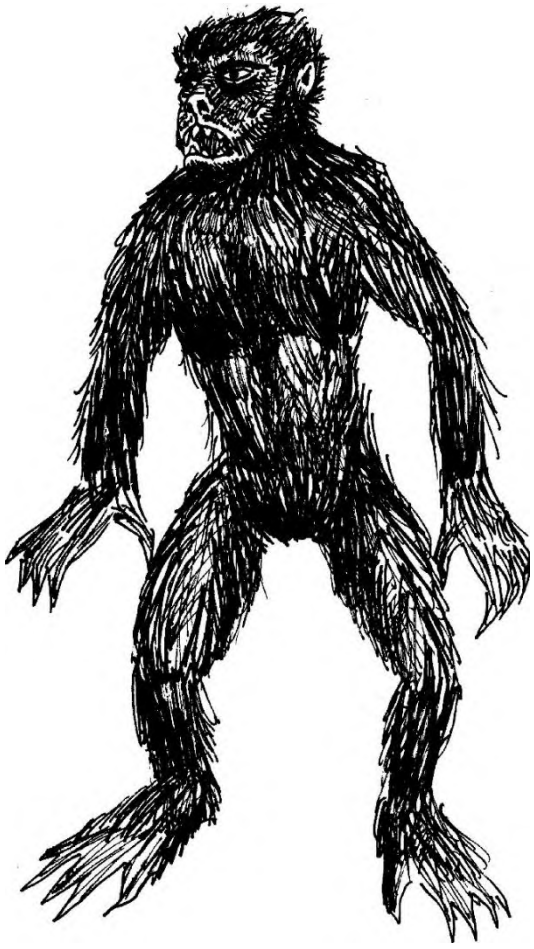
Uffe-Ukrit looked down at the lifeless bodies of two of his men. One died when the rope he was holding to control a net was yanked hard enough to unseat him from his tree stand, dropping him on his head. The other had gotten too close to the female pakpao and her claws had eviscerated him.

Wrapped up in the nets the female didn't look all that dangerous. She was a short humanoid, no more than four

feet tall. Her body, including her near-human face, was covered in dense dark brown fur. As an omnivore feeding primarily on vegetation, her teeth were nothing special, but her retractable claws on hands and feet were another matter ... as Ukrit's man unfortunately discovered. Once she got hold of anyone she'd rake their guts out.

"How is Possum doing?"

Ofrit waited a beat, then another, before answering. "He's got ugly slashes on his arms and across the ribs. Those claws slashed right through his leather shirt." He grunted. "If infection doesn't set in before we get him to a cleric, he'll make it." He grunted again, "We cleaned the wounds but her claws are dirty." His tone didn't sound optimistic for the man.



The monster hunter grunted in return. He thought, "*Too bad he lived. We'll have to carry him along with her, and I'll have to pay him. Good thing that cleric of Donblas still owes me a favor for getting that nixie out of his storeroom, otherwise I'd have to pay for a healing spell.*" He made a wry face, "*Maybe I'll get lucky and he'll die of infection.*"

"Keep his wounds clean and let's get him to a cleric as soon as possible."

"What about the cub?" Ofrit asked.

Uffe-Ukrit wrinkled his nose in disgust. "We hurt it too bad capturing it. Probably won't make it back to Sathea alive." He looked at the female for a long moment before continuing. "Kill it."

The female snarled at him, like she understood. The hatred in her eyes was palpable.

But he didn't care, other than to keep her bound and himself away from her claws.

Pakpao

Frequency:	very rare
No. Appearing:	1 (2)
Armor Class:	3
Move:	18"
Hit Dice:	4 (1 to 3)
% in Lair:	50%
Treasure Type:	nil
No. of Attacks:	3 or 2
Damage/Attack:	1d2, 1d6, 1d6 or 1d8, 1d8
Special Attacks:	rake
Special Defenses:	surprised 1 in 10
Magic Resistance:	standard
Intelligence:	low
Alignment:	N
Size:	S (4' tall)
Level/XP Value:	V / 210 + 5/hp

The pakpao (pronounced "pak-pow") are secretive loners. Sages are unsure of their relationship to other humanoid species. While they're clearly different from humans and demi-humans, neither are they related to any goblinoid species. They may be a singular offshoot in the tree of life. Unlike other humanoid creatures, they do not appear to have a language.

Adults stand about four feet high. Their human-like bodies are covered in dense, dark brown fur. This includes their faces, which are otherwise startlingly human. Their hands are furless on the palms and the feet have pads like a dog. They have retractable claws like a cat on both hands and feet, claws that are very strong and very sharp.

Their diet is mostly vegetarian, although they eat insects, small mammals, lizards, and fish. They will eat a fresh kill but not aged carrion.

They are not normally vicious, but will defend themselves without restraint if attacked while having no line of retreat. They will bite and claw with their hands. If an opponent does not retreat, if any two of three strikes

hit, they latch on and automatically rake with their feet claws for 1d8 each on all succeeding rounds.

Pakpao have a reputation as wanton killers, but this is inaccurate. They want to be left alone, but react savagely if attacked.

During the late fall mating season a female will mate with a single male during a weeklong period. The male departs and the female gives birth to a single cub five months later. She raises the cub for a two-year period. During the second summer after its birth the now three-foot-tall child will depart on its own, its adult antisocial instincts activating. In another three years it will be full grown, although until then it is referred to as a youngling.

When pregnant or while caring for her cub, the female is especially dangerous. In defense of the cub she gains double attacks each round until she latches on, and the raking attacks will inflict an additional 2 hp per die.

While pakpao do not appear to be very intelligent, they have good memories. Anyone hurting one should take measures to never encounter that specimen again, as it will remember them and will attack.

Cubs found with a mother will have 1 or 2 hit dice and will do 1/4 damage (but always at least 1 hp/die). Independent younglings will have 3 hit dice and inflict half damage.

Cloak of the Wilderness

This magic item resembles a typical cloak, made of a dark grey material that reaches down to mid-calf. In addition to acting as a **Cloak of Protection**, in natural settings the cloak changes color to match the environment, providing a level of camouflage. When moving cautiously the cloak reduces an observer's chance of detecting the wearer by 10%. When the wearer remains motionless, the observer's chance of detection is reduced by 25%. The cloak also masks the wearer's scent, reducing the chance of being detected by scent by 15%. Once per day the wearer may go invisible for 1d4+1 rounds, although any offensive action dispels the invisibility.

These cloaks have been found to provide +1, +2, or even +3 bonuses on armor class. Most (70%) are +1, some (20%) are +2, and the remainder (10%) are +3.

GP Value: 15,000, 20,000, or 25,000; XP Value 1,500, 2,500, 3,500

Ring of the Wilderness

This magical ring provides a bonus to armor class and saving throws as does a normal **Ring of Protection**. However, it also provides a measure of protection against the elements. The wearer's body is toughened against the elements, both heat and cold. In adverse conditions the wearer will survive twice as long as a person not protected, so effects such as heatstroke and frostbite are delayed and reduced in severity. In addition, the effects of dehydration are reduced by half, although when dehydrated the wearer will need to drink twice as much water to return to normal.

These rings have been found to provide +1, +2, or even +3 bonuses on armor class and saving throws. Most (70%) are +1, some (20%) are +2, and the remainder (10%) are +3. Note that the ring provides no protection from magical fire or cold other than the saving throw bonus.

GP Value: 15,000, 20,000, or 25,000; XP Value 1,500, 2,500, 3,500

Shield of Light

These shields are typically fashioned from Mithril/steel alloys and the front surface is always highly polished. When worn on either arm the shield emits a glow similar to a *Light* spell, illuminating a 30-foot radius hemisphere in front of the shield. This ability is usable up to 3 times per day, and each usage has a duration of up to 6d6 rounds. The wearer may cancel the effect before the duration expires.

Most shields found (60%) are of +1 value, 30% are of +2 value, while 10% are +3. There is also a 10% chance that any shield emits light with the intensity of *Continual Light* (60-foot hemisphere) that lasts up to 10d10 rounds.

GP value / XP value

+1: 3,750 GP / 375 XP
+2: 7,500 GP / 750 XP
+3: 11,250 GP / 1,125 XP

by Bryan Fazekas

Friend or Foe: Mutt

by Andrew Hamilton

Background

A half-elf raised by his grandfather after his mother died, Mutt's grandfather was a hard and bitter man, often drinking too much, and getting violent when drunk. Mutt grew up with a regular beating, and when he wasn't getting the back of his grandfather's hand, he was being ignored. For some reason only known to his grandfather, the old man hated Iason, and despised his mixed heritage - which resulted in the old man calling Iason "Mutt", a name the adventurer still uses today.

His only friends growing up were the farmyard dogs. Not surprisingly, Mutt spent as much time as possible with the dogs, and he wandered the countryside to stay away from his grandfather. While roaming the countryside, Mutt learned to use a sling to bring down rabbits and grouse, keeping food on the table for himself and in the dog bowls.

As soon as he was old enough, Mutt struck out on his own. At first he had a hard go of it, working hard labor for bread and copper coins. This changed when an old shepherd took Mutt under his wing, and Mutt spent three years with the old man (Old James, he called himself), tending flocks in the hills east of Raven's Hollow. In no time at all, Mutt's aptitude with dog handling and training made him a valued member of the community of shepherds, and Mutt felt at home among a group of people who had such strong relationships with their dogs.

When Old James passed away, it was the saddest moment of Mutt's life. He spent another year with the shepherds, but every day Mutt was reminded of Old James. Finally, the shepherds convinced Mutt to wander a bit, and find his place. There would always be a place for him in the hills, but the shepherds hoped that he would find peace before returning. Mutt took his leave, traveling north to the Green Run with a ranger, learning more about fighting and archery along the way.

Now known as the best dog trainer in the region (even if he seems a little off), Mutt has many associates and friends amongst the ranks of shepherds, hunters and rangers. His services are sought after, although he is very selective about whom he works for. He is as likely to help shepherds train their dogs as he is to train a noble's hunting hounds. Despite the demand, Mutt is far from wealthy, living a simple life, content to be well-fed with a roof over his head and in the company of others.

Mutt will not tolerate mistreatment of dogs (he is considered a criminal in Whitebay and Criskford because he stopped people from beating dogs). He also has a distinct dislike for drunks, and never touches alcohol. If he sees a drunk get violent with someone, especially a child, Mutt will intervene, resorting to violence if necessary. Mutt also has a tendency to help shepherds and ranchers defend their flocks from trouble (which has made him very popular with these folks and their families), and he is always willing to help search for missing people. While he is a wandering adventurer, Mutt is not interested in delving into dungeons, fighting against armies, or gathering treasure. He seems happiest just "helping out" as he wanders.

As he wanders, Mutt takes the opportunity to tell willing listeners of the importance of the relationship between man and dog. There is something about Mutt's voice and bearing that makes it clear when he is talking about dog, the creature and loyal companion, and ***Dog***, a Power that manifests all that is good, noble and loyal about dogs. Mutt also talks about how ***Dog*** encourages this relationship, and that dogs are man's most important ally and must be treated with respect. Most would consider Mutt to be soft in the head, except for the fact that all dogs respond to him as if he were a life-long master, and that he has clerical abilities.

The fact that Mutt can cast spells and worships ***Dog*** has led to no end of debates and chin wagging among priests and sages. He seems to be the only cleric of ***Dog***, and some suspect he casts spells from pure faith alone. Others speculate that he is drawing on some animal spirit, or forces similar to those that the druids draw on. Mutt himself is uninterested in the debate. "It doesn't matter if you don't believe in ***Dog***. It only matters that ***Dog*** believes in you."

Mutt (Iason Scrale)

Lawful Neutral (Good tendencies), Half-Elf Male, Cleric/Fighter 3/3

Str 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Cha 10 (19 to domestic dogs)

AC 6 (L**eather Armor +1** & Dexterity), HP 21

Memorized Spells: *Command*, *Cure Light Wounds*, *Dog Talk* (new spell, see below); *Hold Person*

Weapons: **Horn Blade +2** (scimitar), short bow & 9 arrows, sling & 8 stones, hand axe.

Equipment: camp roll, backpack, coin purse (typically containing 11 to 20 pp, 21 to 40 gp, and 21 to 40 sp), tinder box, water skin, **Potion of Extra Healing**, **Oil of Impact** (3 applications, used on sling stones).

In addition to the weapons he carries, Mutt is also proficient with the club and knife. If the non-weapon proficiencies described in the *Dungeoneers Survival Guide* and *Wilderness Survival Guide* are used, consider Mutt to have Animal Training (Dogs) with an effective Wisdom score of 23. He is able to reduce the training time by 50%, and has no trouble teaching dogs the most complex tricks. He is also proficient in Animal Handling (all domestic animals), Endurance, Hunting and Running.

The Pack

Mutt is always accompanied by three dogs (sometimes more if he has picked up some strays, or is training a few). These dogs seem smarter than the average dog, more watchful, and there are a lot of stories about these dogs being able to follow very complex commands, as well as how they fight in Mutt's defence.

Lump, Sally, and Rex (big dogs) AC 6, MV 12", HD 2+2, Hp 15 to 18, Atts 1, Dmg 2d4, SA "aid", SD surprised 1 in 6, AL N, Int Semi, Size M, XPV 50 + 3 xp/hp

These three dogs share a strong bond with Mutt, and once per day each dog may be empowered by an effect equal to an *Aid* spell (at a level of effect equal to Mutt's clerical level). They understand everything he says (even when not using magic), and follow the instructions completely. Mutt loves his dogs, and they are inseparable.

Getting Mutt Involved in the Campaign

Mutt is a good resource for low and mid-level PCs; he knows the countryside well, and travels with a pack of dogs that are excellent sentries and scouts. He might be willing to act as a guide, or to help PCs train their own dogs. Mutt would also be very motivated to help stop any threat to the shepherds of the Ravens Hollow region (be it humanoid raiders, wyverns, ankhegs, etc.). While he won't go into ruins and dungeons, he'll guard the camp (and has a reputation for honesty and reliability) and watch over mounts and other livestock (and he is also known for being good with all animals).

Of course, not every encounter with Mutt need be friendly. A casual encounter with Mutt in a tavern could easily result in a fight if one or more of the PCs are obnoxious drunks. The same holds true if Mutt witnesses them mistreating domestic animals, particularly dogs.

Similarly, if PCs are the type to use war dogs as disposable assets, they may receive a less than pleasant visit from Mutt and his dogs and learn a lesson about disrespecting ***Dog***.

Dog & His Clerics

Whether or not ***Dog*** is a real Power (possibly a Power from the Beastlands?) is for each DM to decide. Clerics of

Dog do receive some powers however (including spell casting), and they are a playable alternative.

The ability to lead a pack of 2+2 HD creatures with unshakeable loyalty may seem like an opportunity rife for abuse, and DMs may be reluctant to allow a PC into their campaign that will be wandering around with a small strike force. There are several limitations that a DM should take into consideration however.

First, those who worship ***Dog*** value the lives of dogs as much as they do of humans. This means that they will not needlessly throw the lives of their canine companions away. While clerics of ***Dog*** will fight bravely, and take their canine companions into danger, they are not interested in fighting suicidal battles unless there is some greater good to be served by it (such as saving a village, saving an entire flock of sheep, or rescuing kidnapped children).

Secondly, those who worship ***Dog*** also celebrate the bond between man and animals, and the civilization that bond has developed (animal husbandry, agriculture, etc.). While their primary concern is the relationship between man and dog, clerics of ***Dog*** look with ill favor on any who mistreats a domesticated animal. In many ways, clerics of Dog will be aligned in worldview, and in others they will be opposed (***Dog*** has no tolerance for wild animals, including wolves, that prey on livestock and threaten man).

Third, keeping a pack of dogs fed is not easy (or cheap), nor is it easy to find an inn or tavern that'll put up with a pack of a dozen big dogs. The logistics of traveling with a large number of dogs should not be underestimated.

Fourth, dogs may present a whole host of limitations in a dungeon. They can't climb ladders, swing from ropes, climb walls, etc. While they are dangerous to low level monsters, their poor Armor Class and inability to affect creatures hit by magical weapons limits their efficacy at mid-levels.

Clerics of ***Dog*** receive the following benefits:

1st Level

- Receives the ability to "Dog Talk" once per day (as per the spell), as a free ability (i.e. it does not use up a spell slot).
- The cleric has an effective Charisma of 18 to domesticated canines, and will never be attacked by a domestic dog (the cleric also receives a +1 bonus to Charisma when dealing with other canines).
- Bond with one dog/level: a bonded dog may have an effect equal to Aid (as per the 2nd level spell detailed in Unearthed Arcana, once per day, at a level of effect equal to the cleric).

3rd Level

- The cleric's effective Charisma increases to 19 when dealing with domesticated canines (and receives an effective +2 bonus to Charisma when dealing with other canines).

5th Level

- The cleric may speak to domestic dogs at will, and without limitation.
- The cleric's effective Charisma increases to 20 when dealing with domesticated canines (and they receive a +3 bonus to their Charisma when dealing with other canines).

7th Level

- The bond that the cleric has with his canine companions increases in power. Each bonded dog in the pack gains a bonus of +1hp/level of the cleric, and has the same saving throws as the cleric; this reflects the canine companions of the cleric becoming imbued with divine power by Dog.
- The cleric's effective Charisma increases to 21 when dealing with domesticated canines (and they receive a +4 bonus to their Charisma when dealing with other canines).

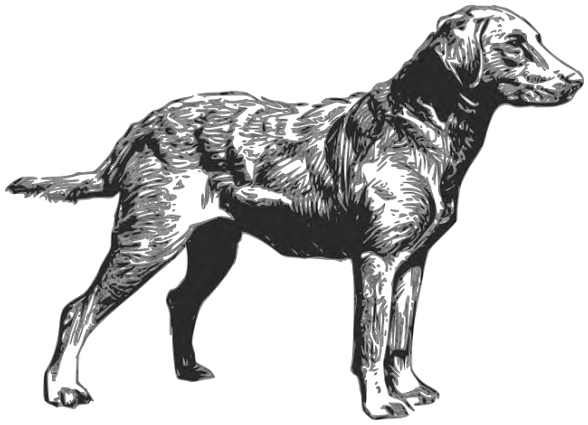
9th Level

- The cleric's effective Charisma increases to 22 when dealing with domesticated canines (and they receive a +5 bonus to their Charisma when dealing with other canines).
- The cleric is able to shape change into a dog (as per the druidic ability) three times per day.

11th Level

- The cleric's effective Charisma increases to 23 when dealing with domesticated canines (and they receive a +6 bonus to their Charisma when dealing with other canines).
- The cleric of Dog receives their most powerful ability, the ability to summon a pack of Spectral Hounds (as per the new monster described elsewhere in this issue of & Magazine) once per week. The pack will serve the cleric for 6 turns + 2 turns per level, and numbers 1d6 spectral hounds + 1 spectral hound/level of the cleric.

In exchange for these granted powers, clerics of Dog lose the ability to Turn Undead, and they are unable to wear metal armor or use shields. Clerics of ***Dog*** are also able to become proficient with knives. Clerics of ***Dog*** are also unable to cast spells higher than 5th level.



New Spell

Dog Talk

Level:	1st level Cleric
Type:	Alteration
Range:	0
Duration:	4 rounds/level
Components:	V, S
Area of Effect:	Domestic dogs within 4" radius of cleric
Casting Time:	3 segments
Saving Throw:	None

Similar to the *Speak with Animals* spell, the *Dog Talk* spell is limited in only being effective on domesticated (or feral) dogs. *Dog Talk* has a longer duration, and allows conversation with all domesticated dogs in the area of effect, not just a single animal. It will not work on wolves, death dogs, or other canines.

Mace of the Martyr

This **Footman's Mace +2** possesses additional powers when wielded by a good-aligned cleric. Once per day the wielding cleric may take the wound of another good-aligned creature within 9" upon themselves. This wound must be one that involved physical damage (i.e. a sword stroke, bite, claw, lightning strike, etc.), the power being ineffective against other forms of attack such as mental attacks, disease, petrification, or poison, or anything else with effects other than direct damage.

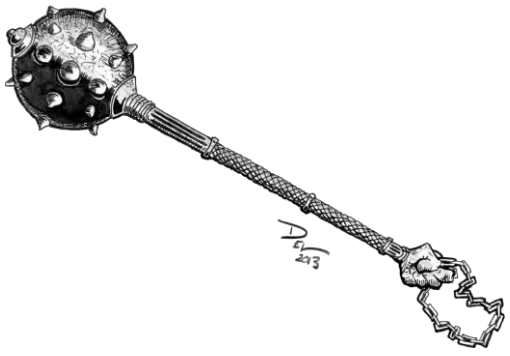
The cleric must enact the power during the same combat that the wound has occurred, and once the power has enacted, the original creature wounded is miraculously healed of all damage from that attack as if it never happened, and the wound is transferred to the cleric for the exact amount of damage the creature initially sustained.

The mace has another function. If the butt of the weapon is slammed into the ground and a cry to the cleric's god uttered, the mace will heal all good-aligned creatures within a 20' radius of 2d8+1 hp damage. After this 'mass-heal' function has been used, the mace will be noticeably degraded, pitted, corroded, scratched etc., as if the power has directly damaged it in some way. In effect, the mace has taken the damage of those around it upon itself. After this has occurred, the mace performs at half strength (i.e. **Mace +1**, mass-heals for 2d4+1 hp damage) until one day has elapsed, at which point the mace becomes pristine once more and functions as a **Mace +2** again with full healing powers.

Note that if the 'mass-heal' power is used whilst the mace is still recovering (i.e. used a second time in the same day) the power will work at half efficacy but the mace will be destroyed instantly, causing 4d4 hp damage to the wielder and 2d4 hp damage to all within a 10' radius unless they successfully save vs death, in which case they take a mere 1d4 hp damage as it explodes in a burst of shrapnel.

GP value 17,500; XP value 2,000

by Dan Rasaiah



Tactical Magic: Familiars

by Ian Slater

Expanding familiars beyond the book

Magic-users are a challenging class to play in 1E: low hp, bad AC and difficulty in going into melee – these keep you on your toes. There are mechanisms to ameliorate these things; magic items and spells can address some of these concerns. However, at low levels there are fewer options, one of the few being the spell *Find Familiar*.

In folklore and fantasy literature familiars are the companions of magicians, in some cases considered to be the vessel for evil spirits, or even demons or devils in animal form. In 1E a familiar is a creature that is connected to the MU via the first level spell *Find Familiar*. The caster can use the spell to summon a familiar, though it is possible to get a "no familiar in range" result and get nothing at all (wasting the material components of the spell). The familiars are primarily mundane, but there is a slim chance of getting one of four special familiars (brownie, imp, quasit or pseudo-dragon), with significant powers. The creature and the magic-user share hit points and senses, so the familiar can work as a scout, can be used to retrieve small items, etc.

That's pretty awesome for a low-level spell-slinger.

The spell gives a list of options, many from fantasy literature, and then has the possibility of "special familiars", such as a brownie, imp, quasit or a pseudo-dragon, each associated with particular alignments, and all of which are pretty powerful. The list is fairly small, and many people have suggested adding to it to add variety and flavor to the game.

What I have done is to expand the existing table in three ways:

- new mundane familiars
- new special familiars
- new class of familiars: "exceptional"

I also have some general suggestions for how to adjudicate them, as even BTB there are ambiguities.

Rationale for the Revised Table

A New Category

When I started to expand the table I had two primary kernels in mind.

First, the *DMG* description of *Find Familiar* references *Animal Summoning*, a fourth level druid spell that lists a bunch of typical animals that get summoned. Virtually all listed have higher HD and damage than traditional mundane familiars, but they are not magical. I take it that the *DMG* spell description reference was there to clarify and potentially expand the list.

Second, I had an example in mind. I have a homebrew setting that is Indian, and I had a vision of a magic user/shaman with a water buffalo familiar. It isn't a "special" familiar as it has no magical abilities, but it has higher HD than a regular familiar, and attacks that do more damage, so it's not mundane.

In both cases the higher HD and attacks are a big deal, as familiars share hp and in some cases could do decent damage. However, in both cases the familiar lacked the crazy magical stuff like magic resistance and spell like abilities that made a familiar "special".

So they were either off the table, or I needed a new category. I decided on a new category.

"Exceptional" familiars have more than 1 HD, and no magical abilities as special familiars do.

Balancing the Change

The next step was to balance this and other changes. I did this in two ways. First, through the table that determines if you get a mundane, exceptional, or special familiar. The idea is that the first should be most common, the second less, and the third the least.

I considered making exceptional familiars the same odds as special, or essentially keeping just two categories (e.g. classify "exceptional" as "special"), but I decided a third option was better, as players who received an exceptional would no doubt feel the lack of magic was unbalanced for a "special" if the odds were kept so long.

The compromise is a third category that is not as rare as special but not as common as mundane.

The second "balance" to this is that the hp sharing is done a bit differently. First, hp sharing works one way for mundanes, and differently for exceptional and specials.

For mundanes, your hp are pooled. So if the MU had 4 hp and the weasel had 2, they both share the pool of 6 hp. If the mundane familiar dies nothing happens, but if the mundane familiar is alive and you have your hp wiped out, you might get an extra round.

For exceptional and special familiars, hp are not pooled, but work as outlined in the *PHB*. If the familiar dies, the magic user takes two times the familiar's hp in damage.

I think this is fair as an exceptional or special familiar is a HUGE advantage in terms of hit points alone, so there has to be a cost.

Alignment

With respect to alignment, another assumption was made. There are some exceptional familiars with a listed non-neutral alignment, whereas most mundanes are neutral. If you have a chaotic evil exceptional familiar with a Lawful Good magic user, a re-roll might be in order, on the assumption that the spell would not have summoned something that far from the summoner's alignment. This is presumed in the set-up of the special familiars, but unimportant for mundanes due to their general neutrality.

Many exceptional familiars were neutral, so rather than just assign based on alignment, I decided on a table with all of the exceptionals, and the DM and player will have to check for alignment concerns as they happen.

The Categories

Mundane Familiars

With respect to the categories, mundane familiars, examples: dog, rat, are like the familiars listed in the *PHB*, I have just added some others that were not 'traditional' but were in a similar HD/AC range. Mundane familiars are listed in the *PHB* as having 2-4 hp and AC 7, with no attacks listed. So the implication is that they are not willingly entering combat. I have provided a monster book reference for every listed mundane familiar, so if they are attacking or being attacked, the relevant information can be found.

I would recommend swapping out animals on the list based on the terrain type. So if you are in a tropical setting, you might swap out a tree monkey for say a weasel. If you can't find the stats for your preferred swap, just assign the base stats of 2-4 hp and AC 7 and decide on an attack if you like for small damage (e.g. 1-2) when you roll a mundane. It need be no more complicated than that.

I have also made a few arbitrary decisions in the assignments, and these should be noted. For example, I have not included the more common humanoid races such as orcs, gnolls, kobolds, goblins, etc., where I have included some of the newer ones, e.g. mites [*FF*]. This was done strictly for flavor; if you feel the need to include these races, and let's be honest, a kobold familiar would be kind of cool, then I would recommend offering them as options to the player when another humanoid mundane comes up (e.g. baboon, mite).

Finally, with all of the familiars I have left off monsters that are tied to particular places, like Guardian Familiars and mud men. Familiars have to move with their masters, so these monsters were off the table.

Exceptional Familiars

The exceptional familiars are any animal or monster that has a moderately higher HD and damage per attack, but no other magical powers. Some have enhanced senses that lower surprise odds (that has been noted on the table with an *), and there are others with minor abilities, but for the most part the main difference between exceptional and mundane familiars is greater HD and more damage from attacks (a few also get more attacks per round).

The advantage of a familiar like a lion or a tiger cannot be overstated. That is why they have to be much less common than mundane familiars. The table is structured to recognize this. Still, from a "flava" perspective a non-magical animal is very cool. A magic-user in a tropical setting with a panther for a familiar is a fairly common fantasy trope. I think this makes them worth inclusion, and they certainly aren't mundane. As they are the same as specials with respect to hp (e.g. they are not pooled, the magic-user takes damage equal to two times the familiar's hp when it dies), the benefits are risky.

However, you could also cap HD transfer. Quasits have 3HD, and are the highest HD of the BTB special familiars, and could conceivably give a MU 24 hp. For the exceptional familiars you can do one of two things. One option is to translate HD to hp, e.g. a 6 HD familiar gives you 6 hp. If they die you lose 6 hp.

Alternatively, you can give the full hp of an exceptional familiar to the magic-user, as if the creature dies the MU will surely die. A 1st level magic-user with a 5HD lion with say 30 hp will die instantly if the lion dies until he is around name level, assuming 2.5 average hp per level.

That's a significant risk.

Special Familiars

I have picked additional special familiars based on the criteria of moderate increase in HD and a small cluster of powers. In rare instances a monster with no magical power is on the special list as their non-magical abilities are still powerful, or they have higher HD. The best example of this is a poisonous animal with save or die poison. They may not have high HD, or magical abilities, but that poison makes them dangerous. This is obviously an arbitrary and subjective thing, but it should be noted. If you feel something is on the wrong table, you can switch it out.

On the note of alignment, I did not list several alignments for the special familiars as is done in the *PHB*. I have listed the alignment of the special directly, and if more than one alignment is mentioned the special is listed for each. The DM can decide if they want to allow that special for more than one alignment category that is not listed.

I used the following assignments based on what was written in the monster listing, for example:

- Neutral (Chaotic or Lawful) – means chaotic neutral, neutral and lawful neutral
- Neutral (Evil) – means neutral evil and neutral
- Neutral (any) – means neutral, neutral good, neutral evil, chaotic neutral, lawful neutral
- Neutral (all) – means the creature is neutral, but all alignments are compatible

On the note of hit points, as was noted above when special familiars die the magic-user takes twice their full hp in damage, but they get the benefit of their full hit points as well. As with the exceptional familiars, if you want to diminish the benefit of the high HD you can translate HD to hp, e.g. a 6HD familiar gives you 6HP and you take 6HP damage if it dies, or if you want to enhance it, allow full transfer (and loss) of all special familiar hit points.

Finally, if you want to increase the odds of an exceptional or special familiar coming up, for whatever reason, I would suggest requiring an enhanced material component outlay. So for example, the spell requires 100gp of components, so if a magic-user doubled the material component outlay you could allow them to add +/- 2% to the roll. If they added a special ingredient, e.g. a rare monster component, then perhaps add +/- 5% to the roll, etc. You could add incidental bonuses for say consulting sages about material components, or adding a component from the creature desired as a familiar (e.g. add pseudo-dragon tail to the spell to increase the odds of pseudo-dragon.

No matter what, I would recommend that the modifiers for any individual change be small, so no more than +/- 5% for any one modifier.

With all of that preliminary in mind, here are the tables.

Table 1 – Mundane Familiars

01-02	al-mi'raj [FF]
03-04	baboon [MM]
05-06	badger [MM]
07-09	bat [MM2]
10-11	bat, giant [FF]
12-13	booka [FF]
14-15	cat, domestic* [MM2]
16-18	cat, wild* [MM2]
19-20	centipede, giant [MM]
21-22	crow (raven), ordinary [MM2]
23-24	dinosaur (compsognathus)* [MM2]
25-26	dog, wild* [MM]
27-28	falcon/hawk [MM2]
29-30	fire beetle [MM]
31-32	goat [MM2]
33-34	horse, wild [MM]
35-36	hyenas [MM]
37-38	jackal [MM]
39-41	minimal (any) [MM2]
42-43	mite [FF] *
44-45	muckdweller [MM2]
46-47	owl [MM2]
48-49	pedipalp, large [MM2]
50-51	ram [MM2]
52-53	rat [MM2]
54-55	rat, giant [MM]
56-57	raven [MM2]
58-59	raven, huge [MM2]
60-61	squirrel, carnivorous [MM2]
62-63	snyad [FF]
64-65	swan* [MM2]
66-67	termite, giant [MM2]
68-69	vulture [MM2]
70-71	vulture, giant [MM2]
72-73	weasel [MM2]
74-75	wolf [MM]
76-85	no result
86-95	exceptional familiar
96-100	special familiar

* Indicates that the familiar has a listed surprise bonus

Note:

A: All mundane familiars share hp with the magic-user in a pool; the magic-user does not lose any hp when the familiar dies.

B: Any mundane familiar can be switched out with another animal more appropriate for the environment where the familiar was summoned.

Table 2 – Exceptional Familiars

01-02	Ape [MM]
03-04	Ape, carnivorous [MM]
05-06	Badger, Giant [MM]
07-08	Bear, Black [MM]
09-10	Beaver, Giant [MM]
11-12	Blood hawk [FF]
13-14	Boar, Warthog [MM]
15-16	Boar, Wild [MM]
17-18	Buffalo [MM]
19-20	Bull [MM]
21-22	Camel, Wild [MM]
23-24	Cheetah* [MM2]
25-26	Cooshee [MM2]
27-28	Cougar (stat as mountain lion) [MM]
29-30	Crab, Giant [MM]
31-32	Crocodile, normal [MM]
33-34	Crow (Raven), huge [MM2]
35-36	Duodrone [MM2]
37-38	Eagle* [MM2]
39-40	Eagle, giant [MM]
41-42	Firefly, giant [MM2]
43-44	Fire Snake [FF]
45-46	Frog, Killer [MM]
47-48	Frog, Poisonous [MM]
49-50	Galltrit [FF]
51-52	Goat, giant [MM]
53-54	Irish Deer [MM]
55-56	Jaguar [MM]
57-58	Jaculi [FF]
59-60	Jaguar [MM]
61-62	Leopard* [MM]
63-64	Lion* [MM]
65-66	Lizard, giant [MM]
67-68	Lynx, giant [MM]
69-70	Meazel [FF]
71-72	Osquip [FF]
73-74	Otter, giant [MM]
75-76	Owl, giant* [MM]
77-78	Panther (stat as mountain lion) [MM]
79-80	Ram, Giant [MM]
81-82	Rat, Giant [MM]
83-84	Scorpion [MM2]
85-86	Skeleton, animal [MM2]
87-88	Skunk, Giant [MM]
89-90	Snyad [FF]
91-92	Tick, giant [MM]
93-94	Tiger* [MM]
95-96	Toad, giant [MM]
97-98	Weasel, giant [MM]
99	Wolf, Dire [MM]
100	Wolverine [MM]

* Indicates that the familiar has a listed surprise bonus

Note:

All exceptional familiars give their hp to the magic-user, but if the familiar dies the magic-user loses twice that many hp from his total.

Table 3 – Special Familiars

Neutral Good (d20):	
1	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
2	Grig* [MM2]
3	Hoar fox [FF]
4	Kamadan [FF]
5	Moon Dog* [MM2]
6-8	Pseudo-dragon [MM]
9	Snake, amphisbaena [MM]
10	Snake, constrictor [MM]
11	Snake, poisonous [MM]

12	Snake, spitting [MM]
13	Spider, Huge* [MM]
14	Spider, Large [MM]
15	Spider, Phase [MM]
16	Sprite* [MM]
17	Toad, poisonous [MM]
18	Toad, ice [MM]
19	Tween [FF]
20	Volt [FF]

Neutral (d20+d4)

02	Ape, Carnivorous* [MM]
03	Buckawn* [MM2]
04	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
05	Displacer Beast [MM]
06	Grig* [MM2]
07	Grippli [MM2]
08	Hoar fox [FF]
09	Kamadan [FF]
10	Killmoulis [FF]
11	Pixie [MM]
12	Pseudo-dragon [MM]
13	Snake, amphisbaena [MM]
14	Snake, constrictor [MM]
15	Snake, poisonous [MM]
16	Snake, spitting
17	Spider, Huge* [MM]
18	Spider, Large [MM]
19	Spider, Phase [MM]
20	Sprite* [MM]
21	Toad, ice [MM]
22	Toad, poisonous [MM]
23	Tween [FF]
24	Volt [FF]

Neutral Evil (d20+d8)

02	Basidirond [MM2]
03	Bat, Mobat* [MM2]
04	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
05	Crysmal [MM2]
06	Forlarren [FF]
07	Grell [FF]
08	Hoar fox [FF]
09-10	Imp [MM]
11	Kamadan [FF]
12	Kech* [MM2]
13	Mantari [FF]
14	Mephit [FF]
15	Snake, amphisbaena [MM]
16	Snake, constrictor [MM]
17	Snake, poisonous [MM]
18	Snake, spitting [MM]
19	Spider, Huge* [MM]
20	Spider, Large [MM]
21	Spider, Phase [MM]
22	Sprite* [MM]
23	Toad, ice [MM]
24	Toad, poisonous [MM]
25	Tween [FF]
26	Volt [FF]
27	Wolf, winter [MM]
28	Yeth Hound [MM2]

Chaotic Good (d10)

01	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
02	Killmoulis [FF]
03	Pseudo-dragon [MM]
04	Spider, Huge* [MM]
05	Spider, Large [MM]
06	Spider, Phase [MM]
07	Toad, ice [MM]
08	Toad, poisonous [MM]
09	Tween [FF]
10	Volt [FF]

Chaotic Neutral (d20)

01	Atomie* [MM2]
02	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
03	Displacer Beast [MM]
04	Fire Toad [FF]
05	Hoar fox [FF]
06	Kamadan [FF]
07	Quasi-Elemental (lightning) [MM2]
08	Quasit [MM]
09	Rat, Vapor [MM2]
10	Snake, constrictor [MM]
11	Snake, poisonous [MM]
12	Snake, spitting [MM]
13	Spider, Huge* [MM]
14	Spider, Large [MM]
15	Spider, Phase [MM]
16	Sprite* [MM]
17	Toad, ice [MM]
18	Toad, poisonous [MM]
19	Tween [FF]
20	Volt [FF]

Chaotic Evil (d10+d4)

02	Caterwaul* [FF]
03	Demon, manes [MM]
04	Ice Lizard [FF]
05	Mephit [FF]
06	Quasit [MM]
07	Spider, Giant [MM]
08	Spider, Huge* [MM]
09	Spider, Large [MM]
10	Spider, Phase [MM]
11	Toad, ice [MM]
12	Toad, poisonous [MM]
13	Tween [FF]
14	Volt [FF]

Lawful Good (d10)

01	Blink Dog [MM]
02	Brownie* [MM]
03	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
04	Flumph [FF]
05	Spider, Huge* [MM]
06	Spider, Large [MM]
07	Spider, Phase [MM]
08	Toad, ice [MM]
09	Toad, poisonous [MM]
10	Tween [FF]

Lawful Neutral (d10+d8)

02	Brownie* [MM]
03	Cat, elfin* [MM2]
04	Displacer Beast [MM]
05	Hoar fox [FF]
06	Kamadan [FF]
07	Monodrone [MM2]
08	Snake, amphirboena [MM]
09	Snake, constrictor [MM]

10	Snake, poisonous [MM]
11	Snake, spitting [MM]
12	Spider, Huge* [MM]
13	Spider, Large [MM]
14	Spider, Phase [MM]
15	Toad, ice [MM]
16	Toad, poisonous [MM]
17	Tween [FF]
18	Volt [FF]

Lawful Evil (d12)	
01-02	Imp [MM]
03	Meenlock [FF]
04	Mephit [FF]
05	Screaming devilkin [FF]
06	Spider, Huge* [MM]
07	Spider, Large [MM]
08	Spider, Phase [MM]
09	Toad, ice [MM]
10	Toad, poisonous [MM]
11	Tween [FF]
12	Volt [FF]

* Indicates that the familiar has a listed surprise bonus

Note:

A: If you do not want a separate category for exceptional familiars, when "exceptional" comes up on the table, replace it with a mundane, and when special comes up on the table, roll a d4, 1-2 roll on the exceptional table, 3-4 select from the special familiar list.

B: All special familiars give their hp to the magic-user, but if the familiar dies the magic-user loses twice that many hp from his total.

General Adjudication Concerns

Everything so far has addressed the question of how to increase the stock of potential familiars; the next step is to look at concerns related to adjudicating the use of familiars in the game.

What do you do with a familiar when the party is adventuring?

There are two schools of thought on this. First, the familiar is like another party member; they need to be tracked and you need to ask the player what the familiar is doing every combat round just like you would ask about what a PC was doing.

The second approach is that familiars are "off on their own", near the magic-user, but not "in the action", unless a player decides to give them a task or tells them to take an action; then they are "in play" like everyone else.

I would highly recommend the second approach. Unless the PC specifically asks for the familiar to do something that would bring them into the conflict, they are not involved.

A familiar is supposed to be a benefit for the character, not something else that has to be taken care of.

Saving Throws

A mundane familiar should only have to make a saving throw if the magic-user fails theirs. This is similar to what happens with magic-items and AOE spells. If the magic-user fails their save the items they carry all have to make a save. The same should apply to a mundane familiar. This has the benefit of adding a layer of safety to the creature, while not making it invulnerable. For exceptional and special familiars, I would recommend giving them a separate save whether the magic-user fails or not.

If the PC insists on the familiar attacking a target, you have monster book listings with all of the relevant stats available, so this should be possible. However, when attacking and separate from the magic-user a familiar makes its own saving throws by HD, and these generally are pretty low, so they are very vulnerable. One possibility to compensate for this would be to have the familiar save as the magic-user, to reflect their special bond.

Shared Senses

There are two possible interpretations of what it means to have "shared senses" with a familiar. One reading suggests that you could actually see through your familiar's eyes, smell through their noses, etc.

Another possibility is that the familiar enhances the senses of the magic-user that are enhanced in the familiar. So if you had a familiar with excellent vision, the MU would get excellent vision.

I am fond of the first option, but the second is also useful, and it would even be possible to do both. The main point is to sort this out ahead of time as these are different enhancements.

Range of Connection

The *PHB* suggests 12" as the range at which the magic-user and the familiar share hp; it does not state a specific distance beyond which the connection breaks. My suggestion here would be to either make the distance for sharing sensation quite high, either say a mile in radius or even unlimited. Seeing through the eyes of your familiar is handy but it's not game breaking, and sending the familiar that far away poses other risks, so I think it balances out.

Surprise!

Surprise is fairly important in 1E, and having a familiar should convey a benefit. And not just for animals with keen senses: just having two sets of regular eyes should help. I know one could argue that is subsumed into the surprise rules as having a bigger group doesn't reduce surprise, but the idea of a familiar is that they are snooping around and moving in places the PCs can't as they are smaller, or more mobile. They will separate from the party and move around.

So I am inclined to give some sort of surprise bonus to ALL familiars. What I have done IMC is this, a familiar allows a MU to reduce one segment of surprise. It's like having a 16 dex for surprise purposes. This is weaker than giving a general reduction in surprise odds as that would apply to the whole party. The idea here is that the familiar sees something and conveys that info through the mental link to the magic-user.

On the table any entry with a * means they have reduced chances of being surprised, and this benefit applies to the magic-user. SIif you have a creature that is only surprised on a 1 in 6, that applies to the magic-user as well. Whether it applies to the rest of the party is up you your DM, but I believe it would, just like a ranger's would.

So, my recommendation is that for familiars that do not have a reduced chance of being surprised, allow them to eliminate one segment of surprise against the magic-user; if the familiar has a reduced chance of being surprised, it should apply to the whole party.

Shared Hit Points

Just to reiterate what was said above, my proposal is that mundane familiars *pool* hp with the magic-user, so if the familiar dies the magic-user does not lose any hp. Exceptional and special familiars cause hp loss in the magic-user as outlined in the *PHB*.

Last Suggestion

My last suggestion is a bit lateral. It has been pointed out that illusionists don't get familiars, and that this is odd. Illusionists are still magic-users, and in some ways the idea of a familiar (something that looks like X but is in fact different than X) fits better with an illusionist than a generic magic-user.

This can be addressed in two ways. One, you could simply give illusionists *Find Familiar*; they already share some spells with magic-users, so there is precedent, and it would not unduly imbalance anything.

Another way is to come up with an illusionist version of the spell, like this:

Rostum's Shadow Familiar

Level:	Illusionist 1
Type:	Conjuration/Summoning
Range:	special
Area of Effect:	special
Duration:	Permanent
Casting Time:	1 hour
Components:	V, S, M
Saving throw:	None

Similar to the first level magic-user spell *Find Familiar*, this spell allows the illusionist to summon a familiar. It will have 2-4 hp, and those hp are added to the illusionist whenever in her presence, though if the shadow familiar is destroyed the illusionist loses those hp from her initial total.

The shadow familiar allows him to eliminate one segment of surprise while the shadow familiar is present, and it can convey its sensory perceptions to the illusionist like a regular familiar does with a magic-user. However, the shadow familiar is a shadow, and as such may only appear where there is at least some shadow present. All shadow familiars can be sent to the plane of shadow at any time (though when they do their hp benefits and surprise benefits for the illusionist are lost).

A light spell will cause a shadow familiar to be banished to the plane of shadow for the duration of the spell. A continual light spell will banish a shadow familiar to the plane of shadow for a week. Normal attacks do no damage against it, but magical weapons can. The shadow familiar can take the form of whatever animal or monster the illusionist desires, but once it is decided it never changes. No matter what the form they are in, they are AC 0 in the daylight, at night they are almost completely invisible (-4 to hit), they have 2-4 hp and have no damaging attacks.

The material component of this spell is a custom-made silver sphere of 2 inch diameter worth no less than 100 gp and a candle made from ghoul fat which must be lit to cast a shadow on the sphere. While the shadow is cast the illusionist must chant the following phrase, once per round, for the duration of the casting, "Temnota poďte slúžiť ma, temnota prišla na pobyt, byť opatrný mojich nepriateľov a pomôžte mi nájsť svoju cestu" (roughly: "Darkness come to serve me, darkness come to stay, be wary of my enemies and help me find my way")

Kohr Khan's Universal Weapon

The universal weapon is a magical rod, 1' in length and made of iron with no protrusions upon its surface. The words "All to one" are engraved along its length in Dwarven. When the command word is spoken and the wielder thinks of a weapon, the universal weapon turns into any weapon listed in the PHB. The weapon is **+1, +4 Against Shape Changed, Lycanthropic or Polymorphed Opponents**. The wielder has no non-proficiency penalty, regardless of what the weapon is.

Each change lasts for up to 24 hours at the user's discretion, and costs one charge. The rod can be recharged via a *Polymorph Other* spell cast by a magic-user of 15th or higher level; each casting regains one charge. It may be used by fighters and monks.

GP value 18,000; XP value 3,500

Bardiche of Absence +1

For most classes this is is a +1 weapon. In the hands of a monk, however, its true power becomes apparent. It functions as a **Bardiche +1, +2 Against Elementals, +4 Against Out of Phase / Ethereal / Negative Energy / Gaseous Creatures**. In addition, on an unmodified to hit roll with the bardiche the named targets must save versus paralysation or be disrupted; roll d4: 1-2 victim "reforms" in 1-2 turns, 3-4 victim is destroyed permanently.

GP value 18,000; XP value 3000

Morning Star of Retribution

To most, this weapon is a **Morning Star +2** magical weapon. For clerics, the weapon has an additional power. If a being is killed in the presence of the cleric, within 1 turn of death the cleric may strike the corpse with the morning star (no roll to-hit).

The creature that killed the victim just save vs. Death Magic. If successful they suffer 1d10 hp damage. If they fail they take damage equal to the full hp of the deceased. If this is sufficient to kill, they die instantly and the recently deceased is raised with 1/2 normal hp. If the damage doesn't kill the creature, the deceased ignites into a fiery ball and is reduced to ashes.

GP value 18,000; XP value 3,000

Flail of Faith

A weapon is a **Footman's Flail +2**. In the hands of a cleric it gains the magical ability to disarm opponents on a successful roll to hit AC8. In addition, any unsuccessful attack against the cleric gives them an additional attack before the next attack sequence begins.

GP value 5,000; XP value 1000

by Ian Slater

Brewmaster:
Extraordinary Holy Symbols

by Timothy Connolly

When adding spice to your tabletop RPG sessions, remember to throw the clerics a bone. This character class works hard for the safety of the adventuring party, and they deserve better than just another pat-on-the-back from their deity. The following random tables will help you to craft holy symbols which your players will remember for all of their days.

Shape of Holy Symbol

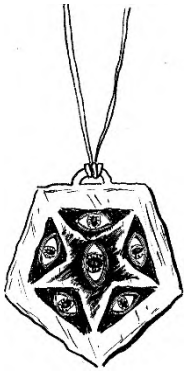
1d20	Shape
1	Circle
2	Square
3	Triangle
4	Trapezium
5	Rhombus
6	Parallelogram
7	Oval
8	Diamond
9	Pentagon
10	Hexagon
11	Heptagon
12	Octagon
13	Nonagon
14	Decagon
15	Semi-Circle
16	Arrow
17	Tree
18	Sun
19	Moon
20	Star

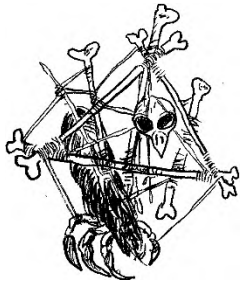
Color of Holy Symbol

1d20	Color
1	Blue
2	Red
3	Yellow
4	Violet
5	Orange
6	Green
7	Gray
8	Magenta
9	Fuchsia
10	Olive
11	Beige
12	Maroon
13	Pink
14	Indigo
15	Burnt Sienna
16	Indian Red
17	Cobalt Blue
18	Ochre
19	Brown
20	Multi-colored [roll TWICE on this table]

Composition of Holy Symbol

1d20	Composition
1	Copper
2	Silver
3	Electrum
4	Gold
5	Platinum
6	Titanium
7	Pine
8	Oak
9	Spruce
10	Elm
11	Larch
12	Maple
13	Stone
14	Clay
15	Skymetal (fallen asteroid fragment)
16	Brass
17	Bronze
18	Iron
19	Glass
20	Turquoise

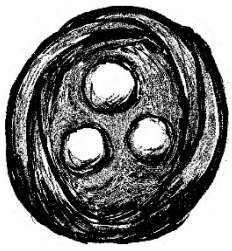




Now that we've given the holy symbol a shape, a color, and a composition, let's give it a unique characteristic.

Unique Characteristic

1d20	Composition
1	Glows blue in the presence of gems and precious metals
2	Appears to have an etching on its side; is actually a scratch from the fingernail of the cleric's deity
3	Will communicate telepathically with its wielder once per day, answering a question truthfully with "Yes" or "No"
4	Appears to be ablaze when viewed by those of evil alignment
5	Allows its wielder to fly once per day, for one minute
6	Shrouded in magical smoke at all times
7	Weightless to its wielder, but weighs a hundred pounds if anyone else tries to take it
8	Is also a gate key to planar home of deity
9	Create Food And Water once per day, as per the Cleric spell of same name
10	Children are fascinated by it
11	Glows red in the presence of virgins
12	If stolen from its wielder, the new wielder of the holy symbol will magically appear to be nude until the holy symbol is returned to its rightful wielder
13	If thrown, will return to the wielder with 100% accuracy
14	If buried, will never be found except by its wielder
15	If worn on a silver necklace, its wielder cannot be harmed by lycanthropes
16	Glows yellow in the presence of others who worship same deity
17	Always floats in water, and never sinks beneath the surface
18	Cannot be corroded or harmed by acid in any way
19	If swallowed by a dragon, the dragon will explode
20	When squeezed, all evil characters in a 20-foot radius immediately fall victim to an unforeseen wardrobe malfunction of DM's choice



Historical Significance

1d20	Composition
1	Centuries ago, it was the property of an ancient order of clerics, and it was given only to the most devout of their order
2	It was lost in a wager decades ago, and the family that lost it in the wager now wants it back, by any means necessary
3	It was pinched from a member of the king's personal clergy, and signposts announcing a reward for its safe return have been popping up all over the kingdom
4	The last missing piece of the Xylemfloam collection, and a certain wealthy collector will stop at nothing to unite it with the rest of the collection where it belongs
5	The PC's uncle went missing many years ago, but he gifted it to the PC before leaving
6	It once belonged to an ancient mariner king, whose name is long since forgotten
7	Once upon a time, it fell from the skies and landed in a wheat field
8	It was once worn around the neck of a queen during a parade
9	Bards from all across the land have written poems and sung songs about it, because of how brightly it gleams in the moonlight
10	It was the only holy symbol to survive a temple fire a decade ago, which was so disastrous that people still talk about it today
11	Still intact, after having once been thrown into a volcano, where it remained fully-submerged in molten lava for an hour
12	Retrieved from a tarrasque dungpile, after its last rampage, ninety-nine years ago
13	It once appeared in a dream, to a devout prince, who then went on to fashion holy symbols with a similar design for everyone in his clergy
14	Demogorgon wants it destroyed
15	Asmodeus wants it destroyed
16	Orcus wants it destroyed
17	Baalzebul wants it destroyed
18	Jubliex wants it destroyed
19	Dispater wants it destroyed
20	An old prophecy tells of a time when the wielder of it will cleanse the realm of much evil, so much so, that druids will rise up in unison, in an effort to restore balance

And lastly, remember to also add a random splash of history to the holy symbol.

Mini-Adventure:
Archer Skeletons

by Andrew Hamilton

Texts Required:	PHB, DMG
Monster:	Archer Skeletons, Skeletons, Zombies, Ghoul Hounds, Death Master and Necro-Otyugh
Terrain:	Forest, Rural Borderlands
Party levels:	2nd to 4th (although the necro-otyugh is a tough opponent for even 4th level PCs!)

Experience:

Total:	9,956 xp
Monsters:	4,768 xp (excluding created skeletons)
Treasure:	5,188 xp (excluding spell books)

Note: The archer skeletons are a retrofit 2E monster, and the ghoul hounds and necro-otyugh are (as far as I know) just something I crafted to meet a need. How did I find the archer skeleton? Glad you asked. I was bored and surfing the net when I came upon the online database of 2E monsters at http://www.lomion.de, and I started hitting the random option and bouncing through the database. There were a lot of monsters that made me go "meh", and then there were some that made me say, "That's not bad, I could use that". This encounter/lair/mini-adventure is a result of that surfing session. Whoever maintains the *www.lomion.de* website, I'd like to say thanks for all of your hard work. It was a fun resource to spend some time surfing through.

Note #2: The Death Master NPC class was designed by Len Lakofka and published in *Dragon Magazine* issue #76. It seems to make for an interesting villain.

Setup

1) Life on the borderlands is always dangerous, but recently more travelers and locals have been going missing than is the norm. Trackers and searchers have found areas where battles might have taken place, but no bodies or remains have been left behind. Someone needs to find the villain behind these attacks.

2) Recently many of the village graves were dug up and robbed in the dead of night. Presumably the robber has some dark plan in place.

3) A young boy has run into the village, terrified and babbling incoherently about "an army of the dead" marching towards the village.

Background

Arvitahs the Gruesome (a 6th level death master) recently unlocked the secrets of manufacturing Archer Skeletons. He now roams the countryside with a band of 15 archer skeletons, seeking victims (for both more bodies and treasure).

The first attack is always a miss, as the archer skeletons seek to create 15 skeletons to attack the victims. Note a missed arrow lands 5d6 feet away and turns into a 1 HD skeleton which will then attack the intended target.

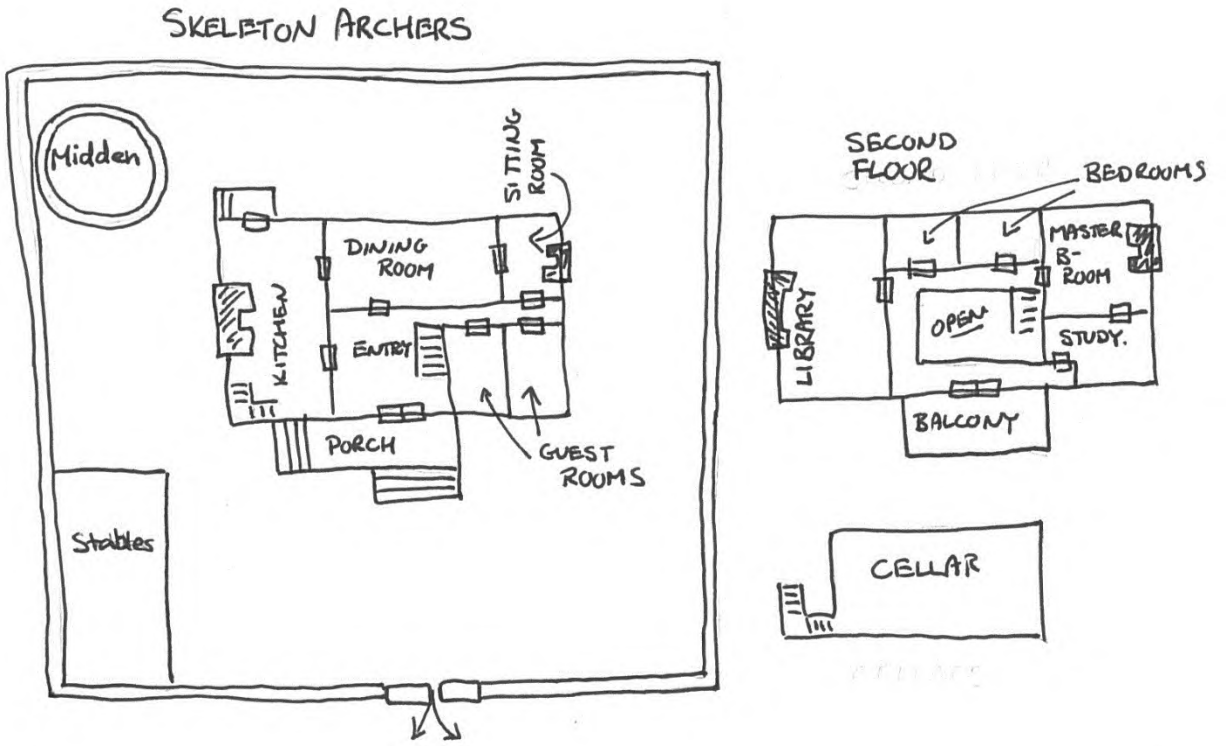
Archer Skeletons (15) (AC 7, MV 12", HD 2, Hp 12 each, Atts 1 (longbow & bone arrows), Dmg 1d6 per arrow, SA create skeletons, SD damage resistance (1/2 damage from piercing or cutting weapons), immune to sleep, charm, hold, fear & cold, MR standard, Int non, AL N, Size M, XPV 105 each). Each has 24 bone arrows.

Normal Skeletons (varies) (AC 7, MV 12", HD 1, Hp 6 each, Atts 1, Dmg 1d6, SA nil, SD immune to sleep, charm hold and cold, 1/2 damage from piercing & edged weapons, MR standard, Int non, AL N, Size M, XPV 24 each)

Ghoul Hounds (2) (AC 6, MV 12", HD 2, Hp 14 each, Atts 3, Dmg 1d6 (bite), 1d3/1d3 (claws), SA paralyzation, SD immune to sleep, charm & hold spells, MR Standard, Int semi, AL CE, Size S, XPV 93 each)

The death master is accompanied by two (2) loyal ghoul hounds (basically 2 large dogs turned into ghouls).

Arvitahs the Gruesome, 6th level Death Master (1) (AC 7 (**Ring of Armor** (new magical item)), MV 12", HD 6d4+12, Hp 29, Atts 1, Dmg weapon (**scimitar +1**) or spell, SA spells, SD speak with undead, undead must save vs "8" to attack, MR 30% resistance to sleep & charm,



AL NE, Size M, XPV 757) (Str 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Dex 15, Con 15, Cha 7) (in addition to the **Ring of Armor** and **Scimitar +1**, Arvitahs carries a **Potion of Flying**, a **Potion of Healing**, and a **Scroll of Invisibility**)

Memorized spells include: *Protection From Good*, *Scare*, *Stinking Cloud*. **Note:** if out "hunting with a band of skeleton archers, Arvitahs may substitute invisibility for stinking cloud, and avoid attacking, instead observing the effectiveness of his undead troops.

Additional spells (in his spell book) include (1*) Animate Skeletons*, *Animate Zombies*, *Read Magic*, (2) *Attract Ghouls*, *Invisibility*, *Wizard Lock*

The Death Master lairs in an old hunting lodge, which has been long abandoned by a fallen noble family. The Death Master has been using zombies (the animated remains of some of his victims) to fortify the lodge, gathering stones from a nearby river. In the process of gathering stones and making a piled stone wall, the zombies have been fouling the river with silt, mud and bits of necromantically tainted flesh.

The Manor ("Old Hunting Lodge")

Note: The constant exposure to necromantic energies and residues has resulted in the entire area of the manor becoming tainted. Attempts to turn undead are conducted at a penalty of -2 to the d20 roll, and even if turning is successful the number of undead turned is reduced by 2.

Courtyard

NOTE: there are 6 archer skeletons on a balcony (described below) who will immediately respond to intruders.

There are always 5 to 8 (1d4+4) zombies milling around the courtyard, working on the defensive wall. They have

been instructed to attack any living creature that enters the courtyard other than Arvitahs or anyone accompanied by Arvitahs. Many zombies are still trekking back and forth from the river to collect stones to pile on the wall. Each turn another 1d4+2 zombies will return (until a total of 24 zombies are encountered), each carrying a 10 to 20 lbs rock; they will immediately attack intruders.

Zombie (1d4+4 initially, 24 maximum) (AC 8, MV 6", HD 2, Hp 12 each, Atts 1, Dmg 1d8, SA nil, SD immune to sleep, charm, hold and cold, SW always attack last, MR standard, Int non, AL N, Size M, XPV 52 each)

Midden

Once used to compost kitchen waste and stable sweepings and to empty out bedpans, the midden is now used for those same purposes (although with only Arvitahs the midden sees little use). It is also a dumping ground for necromantic waste, which has resulted in the spontaneous creation of a necro-otyugh, which will attack any living creature that comes too close (Arvitahs does not know about this creature, yet).

Necro-Otyugh (1) (AC 3, MV 6", HD 7, Hp 37, Atts 3, Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d4+1 +paralysis, SA paralysis (as per a ghoul), rotting disease (individual bitten will lose 1 hp on the following day, 2 hp on the 2nd day, 3 hp on the 3rd day, etc. as their flesh rots; this damage cannot be healed normally, magical healing is only 50% effective, and a cure disease spell is required to halt the progress), SD never surprised, immune to sleep, charm and hold, SW turned as special, MR standard, Int Low, AL NE, Size L, XPV 996)

Stables

Arvitahs uses the stables as a place to store fresh bodies while he decides what to do with them. There are currently 6 naked human bodies hanging from hooks like sides of beef in a butcher's shop. There are four suits of scale armor, four suits of chain mail armor, one suit of banded armor, 7 long swords, 4 spears and 4 maces piled along one wall (in case Arvitahs wants to arm and armor any undead he creates).

Main Floor

Entrance – (note the doors are wizard locked at the 3rd level of effect) this foyer is open up to the 2nd floor. There are no guards.

Kitchen – surprisingly, this room is kept immaculately clean; Arvitahs may deal in death and with the dead, but he is also a bit of a neat freak and he likes his food well prepared and flavorful. He prepares his own meals, not wanting the undead to touch and foul his food.

Dining Hall – this room is essentially abandoned; Arvitahs takes his meals elsewhere.

Sitting Room – Arvitahs uses this as a study, and takes his meals here. It is neat and orderly.

Guest Room #1 – This room is empty.

Guest Room #2 – This room is full of the clothing, equipment and gear taken from Arvitahs's victims. He has gathered the monetary treasure, but left a fair amount of gear here, and overlooked a pair of **boots of elvenkind**. Arvitahs is keeping all of the clothing in hopes of somehow creating a rag golem empowered by an undead spirit (and anyone reading his journals and diaries will find notes to this effect).

Second Floor

Library – the shelves in this room are mostly empty; when the manor was abandoned the owners took the books with them. Arvitahs has placed 7 books on the shelves:

- Travel journal (taken from a scout that was killed by the archer skeletons, this details the countryside, and a few potential adventuring locations, DM's choice; value may be low to high if it actually leads to a treasure)
- Magic-user's traveling spell book (taken from a magic-user killed by the ghoul hounds, this book

contains the following spells: magic missile, sleep; mirror image, web; dispel magic, lightning bolt)

- Prayer book (taken from a traveling priest of the goddess of agriculture and the hearth, worth 50 gp to a member of the faith, or 500 xp if returned to the church of agriculture)
- Anatomy text (heavily marked up by Arvitahs, this is very clinical and scientific, not necromantic; the drawings are very accurate and Arvitahs's notes are insightful, 150 GPV to the right buyer)
- Embalming & burial text (heavily marked up by Arvitahs, this is very clinical and scientific, not necromantic; the instructional drawings are accurate and Arvitahs's notes are insightful, 75 GPV to the right buyer)
- Poisons (this book is mostly rubbish, written in a confusing cipher by an author purporting to be an assassin; Arvitahs has made several notes commenting on inaccuracies, worth 10 GPV, although a buyer could potentially be fleeced by an unscrupulous seller)
- Burial rights of human nations (marked up by Arvitahs, this is a brief overview of burial customs of major nations and religions. Arvitahs's notes are not very useful, 25 GPV to the right buyer)

Master Bedroom - (note both doors are wizard locked at the 3rd level of effect) Arvitahs sleeps here, and has his treasure hidden in a small chest under the bed; his spell book is in a secret compartment under a floorboard. The chest contains 205 cp, 186 sp, 42 ep, 117 gp and 13 pp and a pouch (which contains 4 x 50 GPV gems, 4 x 100 GPV gems, and a 500 GPV gem). There is also a silk scarf (15 GPV) which is wrapped around two rings, one platinum ring with a moonstone (350 GPV) and a gold ring and cat's eye agate (300 GPV, but actually a **Ring of Contrariness**).

The spell book is in an oilskin bag smeared with contact poison (save vs. poison or die; a successful save reduces the effects to 1d6 hp of damage). The spell book's contents are described under Arvitahs's stat block.

Study – Arvitahs reads here, and is conducting "spell research", which is mostly nonsense as he lacks a formal grounding in magical theory and has very limited magical texts to draw upon. He is trying to create a rag golem, as well as determine how to make his skeletons harder to destroy.

Balcony – a squad of 6 archer skeletons stand on the balcony. If intruders enter they immediately begin firing arrows into the ground, missing on purpose for the first 2 rounds, to create a mob of skeletons to attack the intruders.

Archer Skeletons (x 6) (AC 7, MV 12", HD 2, Hp 12 each, Atts 2 (longbow & 24 bone arrows), Dmg 1d6 per arrow, SA create skeletons, SD damage resistance (1/2 damage from piercing or cutting weapons), immune to sleep, charm, hold, fear & cold, MR standard, Int non, AL N, Size M, XPV 105 each)

Bedroom – these rooms are empty, but Arvitahs is considering using them to house his "followers" if he can somehow recruit a low level cleric of a death god or a willing apprentice.

Cellar

The cellar has large tables, embalming and surgical instruments laid out, and has been used to experiment on the dead. It is currently empty (unless the DM desires otherwise).

Loose Ends

Arvitahs is cautious, and will have a fallback safe-hold to which he will flee the moment the fight goes against him. As noted, he has been seeking allies (death priests) and apprentices. Perhaps he will reappear with allies.

Even if Arvitahs is defeated, the undead he created may continue to wander the countryside. These will need to be dealt with sooner or later.

Similarly, if the necromantic taint can create necro-otyughs, who knows what could be spontaneously generated from the necromantic influences on the creek (ghoulish giant frogs, necro-mud-men, etc.).

New Magic Item

Ring of Armor

Useable only by magic-users and their sub-classes, the ring of armor is able to create an armor effect once per day (as per the first level magic-user spell, bestowing either AC 8 or a +1 bonus to AC, lasting until the protected individual suffers 20 hp of damage, at the 12th level of effect. The ring must be worn for 24 hours before the armor effect can be brought into being.

GP Value 3,500; XP Value 1,000 XPV

Hex Crawls: River's Inlet, South Davendowns, & Willow Flats Regions

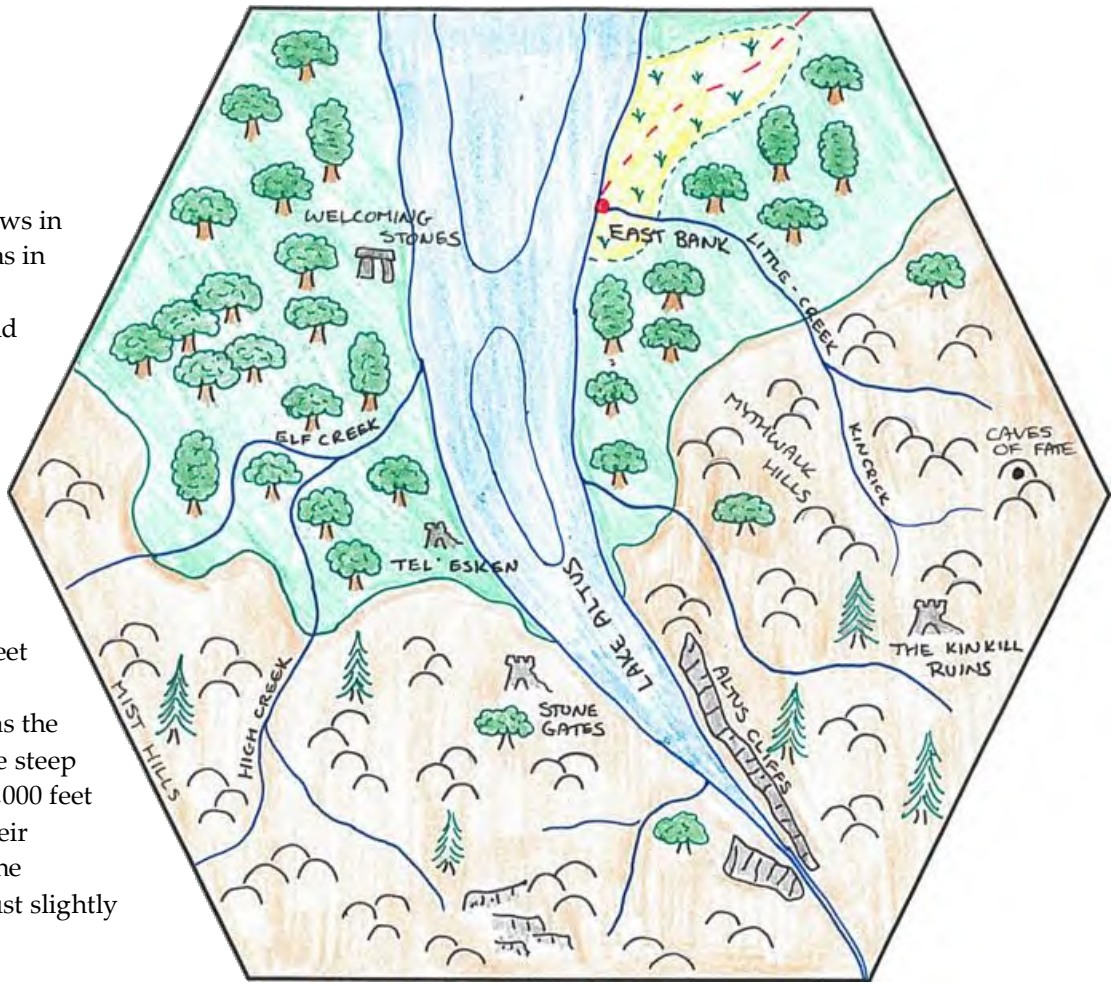
by Andrew Hamilton

What is a "hex crawl"? It is a section of terrain, a hexogonal area 24 miles (38.6 km) across. Taken from the author's campaign world, each hex crawl is fleshed out to give a dungeon master a starting point. Climate, topography, flora, fauna, inhabitants, and features of interest are noted.

What isn't included? NPCs, monsters, encounters. Each hex has background fleshed out, giving the DM a place to start and (hopefully) some inspiration to produce scenarios that fit their worldview far better than someone else's generic encounter.

scale: 24 mile hex

River's Inlet



Climate

The River's Inlet region is temperate, with deep snows in the winter and heavy rains in the late spring and early summer. Late summer and autumn are warm and dry, and autumns tend to be long and the winter snows late in coming. Lake Altus, the major feature of this region, is 2,500' above sea level; the forests and valley are 2,600 to 2,700 feet above sea level. The Mythwalk Hills (known as the Mist Hills to the elves) are steep and high, rising to over 4,000 feet above sea level (and at their highest point they meet the Cloudhome Mountains just slightly south of this region).

Terrain/Topography

The River's Inlet region is named because the inlet of Cloud River into Lake Altus is located here. Cloud River is a huge river, 200' to 250' wide and up to 50' deep. It runs over the Altus Cliffs as Altus Falls, a spectacular 300-foot-high waterfall thundering down into a deep pool that is considered to be the head of Lake Altus. There are other creeks and rivers in the region, including Kincrick and Little Creek in the Lakelands, and High Creek and Elf Creek in the Elven Courts.

Kincrick is a small creek, no more than 15' wide and 3' to 4' deep (often freezing solid in the winter) running over a stony, cobble bed. It joins with Little Creek, which is perhaps 25' wide at its widest, and no more than 6' deep in the deepest pools (and often only 3' to 4' deep). Little

Creek runs through the village of East Bank and into Lake Altus.

High Creek is named because it flows from the highest point of the Mythwalk Hills. It is deep (10' to 15' deep) and swift, but narrow enough in some places (where it cuts deep and narrow) for a human or elf to leap over. Elf Creek (known to the elves as Es'kelra'lils, or "Water that sings over stones") is shallow (3' to 7' deep) and wide (up to 30' wide), with a rocky bottom; the water gurgles, burbles and "sings" as it streams over the uneven bed.

A transition from the Cloudhome Mountains in the south through the Mythwalk Hills and into the Lakelands Valley, the River's Inlet region has a special place in the history of the Lakelands, not only as the border between the lands of man and the Elven Courts, but as a place where epic storms come through the Cloud River valley and into the Lakelands Valley. These storms include blizzards in the winter and thunderstorms in the summer.

Flora

The valley floor of the River's Inlet region, between the hills and the shores of Lake Altus, is covered with a hardwood forest. The forest is comprised of oaks, some ash, maple and a few walnuts. In the western regions the trees seem to grow taller, and unusual trees, both in size, and the occasional tree that doesn't belong like a cedar or gum-tree, can be found in the mixture. Along the shores of the creeks and lake, willows, birch and alder dominate the forest. More than one traveler has remarked that these forests seem almost cathedral-like, more majestic than the other forests of the Lakelands.

A small region around Eastbank is cultivated, with scattered farms bounded by hedgerows and stone fences, and the farms are separated by small copses and thickets of trees (primarily aspen, with some oak and maple). These small forests are open, airy places; woodcutters ensure that deadfall is bundled as firewood and the ongoing harvest of trees has thinned the forests.

The Mythwalk Hills are steep rolling hills; the valleys and southern hill faces are covered by forest (hardwood forests at the lower elevations, but pine, fir and spruce at the higher elevations in the south). The hilltops and north faces of the hills are covered by scrub and grass.

Fauna

Deer and elk are common, with some moose in the lowlands, and occasional herds of bighorn sheep and mountain goats coming into the hills to graze. Predators such as wolves and great cats (both mountain lions and normal lions) hunt the deer and elk, although bear are far less common here than in other parts of the Lakelands. Small game (rabbits, quail, grouse, etc.) is plentiful and a traveler skilled with a bow or sling will have no difficulty finding fresh meat for the campfire.

Land Use

The River's Inlet region is considered to be primarily wilderness, with some agricultural activity immediately around Eastbank. Travelers familiar with the Elven Courts hesitate to call that area "wilderness"; while it is not cultivated, the elves do manage the land, harvesting more than enough game, naturally growing fruit and nuts, and other food to support a significant population. A skilled eye (such as a druid, ranger or even an experienced farmer) will notice subtle signs of elven intervention in the forests of the Elven Court (a branch pruned here, deadfall cleared there, some saplings encouraged to grow and others cut back, etc.).

Inhabitants

Other than the human, elven and half-elven inhabitants of Eastbank, there are no permanent communities in the region. Gnolls, ogres and the occasional troll or giant will make their way into the region through the southern hills. They rarely stay long before coming to the attention of human or elven adventurers, normally resulting in the monsters being killed or driven away.

Communities and Economy

The town of Eastbank (population of just over 660, over 10% of whom are elves of half-elves) is the only permanent community in the region; the communities of the Elven Courts are located farther to the west.

Eastbank is primarily an agricultural economy, although it is also a trade center where elves trade their goods (fine fabrics, bows, carvings, etc.) for raw materials (bull hides, vegetables, etc.) and other goods (dwarf-forged tools are popular). The surprisingly high population of magical practitioners also attracts some unique trade (in terms of glassware, high-quality books and paper, and magical components).

Features of Note

The Welcoming Stones – on the shore of Lake Altus, these massive stones acted as a navigational marker and

welcoming location for those who would cross the lake as they journeyed to the Elven Courts. The beach here is broad, gentle, and made of small smooth stones, perfect for beaching a canoe or boat (and occasionally some such boats will be found beached and abandoned here). It is assumed that the stones have some type of magical ward on them, for if humans (or any creature) lands on the beach and waits by the Welcoming Stones, a band of elves will arrive to greet the visitors within 2 days (although these days the elves are likely to politely send the visitors on their way).

Tel'Esken – once a beautiful citadel built of white stone, this elven fortress fell during the final days of the Shattering. The ruins are now avoided, and allowed to be overgrown by the forest. It is assumed (by treasure hunters) that something evil must live here if the elves avoid it. Adventurers should be aware that while the elves tolerate some trespassing in their lands (particularly hunters, wanderers and the like) they take a dim view of those who would plunder elven ruins and burial mounds.

The Kinkill Ruins – these ruins were once a human fortress known as Kadercrest Keep. It was jointly garrisoned by the Three Kingdoms to honor a treaty with the dwarf lords of the Southern Holds. The fortress fell when friend turned upon friend, and brother upon brother, and the garrison slaughtered itself. The fortress was then occupied by ogres, who fell to fighting amongst themselves. Abandoned, the fortress has suffered the ravages of two centuries of winter snows and spring rains, and it is beginning to collapse. The few adventurers that have set out to explore this place have failed to return. Still its mystery remains a beacon, and every few years another band of adventurers sets out to explore the ruins, never to return.

The Stone Gates – these ruins were once a dwarven fortress, a place where the dwarves of the Southern Holds would meet prior to doing business with the Elven Courts and the Three Kingdoms. The fortification appears to be nothing more than a massive pair of stone gates, 25' tall, 13' wide and 4' thick (reinforced with iron bands) on the face of a cliff. However, there are halls and galleries carved into the cliff side behind the gates. One gate is permanently ajar (the massive winch mechanism that moved it was damaged), and the hold was overrun by raiders and the dwarves slaughtered. Now various monsters claim the place as their own until some other monster seizes the ruins. Rumors abound that undead dwarves still occupy the place.

Caves of Fate – these caves (there are at least 6 openings) are an adventurer's paradise; the caves seem to be full of vermin (spiders, rats, beetles, slimes, etc.), a few more powerful monsters (some undead, the odd troll or ogre), and strange monsters as well. There is treasure, traps, and rooms carved by something. There are also magical features, one of which gives the caves their name, a statue that will speak a person's future if an appropriate sacrifice is made. Who crafted the caves is unknown, as there is work that is human, dwarven, elfin and completely alien. Generations of adventurers have been attracted to these caves, and there seems to be no end to the treasure or the challenge.

Altus Cliffs – these cliffs are high (300'+) and treacherous (-20% chance to climb). They are also home to wyverns, which hunt the forests and over the lake (although they have learned to avoid the Eastbank area, as the magic-users of that place have harmed and killed several wyverns over the years). Several adventurers speculate that the wyverns have developed an impressive hoard over the years as various victims have been carried back to the monsters' roosts; however expeditions to recover this treasure meet with death as climbers or flyers are picked off the cliff or out of the air by angry wyverns. There also appear to be many cave openings in the cliffs, so more than just wyverns may be found here.

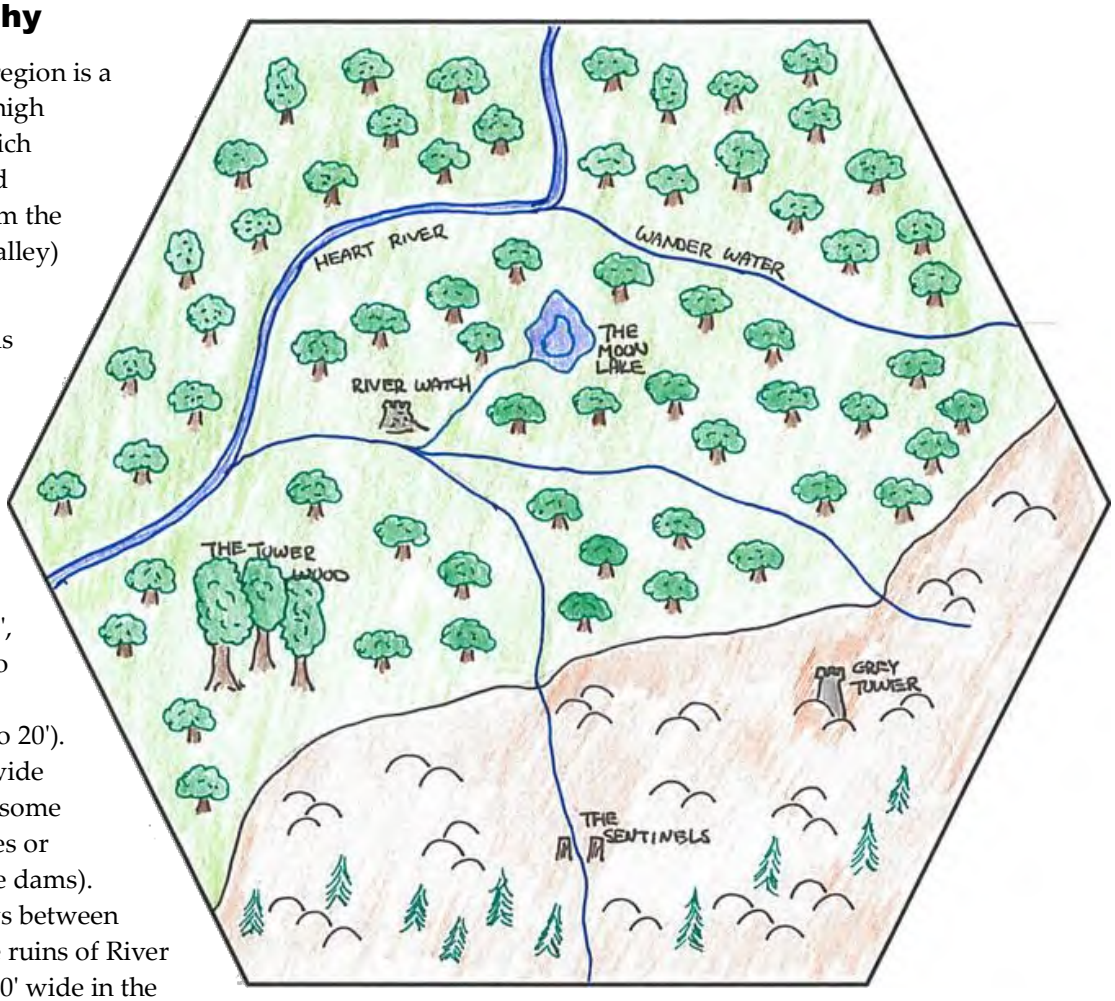
South Davendowns Region

Climate

The South Davendowns region is temperate, with deeper snows in the winter than is usual for the area, a result of weather systems "piling up" against the southern foothills. There are predictable and plentiful rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn. The northern forests are 3,000 to 3,100 feet above sea level, while the southern foothills rise up to nearly 4,000 feet above sea level.

Terrain/Topography

The South Davendowns region is a transitional region, with high foothills in the south (which separate the Skyreach and Southwall Mountains from the forests of the Lakeland Valley) and forests in the north.



In the northern part of this region, the Heart River is about 60' wide, with a depth of 10' to 15' in the centre. After the confluences of the Wanderwater and Watch Creek the Heart River widens to nearly 75', and the depth increases to between 20 and 30' in the centre (averaging closer to 20'). The Wanderwater is 30' wide and about 10' deep (with some larger pools around eddies or where beavers have made dams). Watch Creek (which flows between the Sentinels and past the ruins of River Watch fortress) is about 10' wide in the southernmost reaches of the foothills, but is 25' wide and 7 to 10' deep where it joins the Hearth River.

Moon Creek, which drains The Moon Lake, is 10' wide and about 3' to 5' deep in the centre, flowing over a white gravel bed. The Moon Lake is about 1 mile north to south, and just under a mile in width. It has silvery waters, a result of the white gravel and sand that make up the lake bed. The Birchwynd (pronounced "birch–whined") is the last of the major water bodies in the region, and it flows from the foothills, west through the forests to join with Watch Creek and Moon Creek at the ruins of the River Watch. The Birchwynd is 20' wide at its widest, and up to 10 or 12 feet deep in spots (although it averages 4 to 7 feet deep).

Flora

The South Davendowns are forested, primarily hardwoods in the north (oak, maple, aspen, with birch, willows and alder along the watercourses). The forests extend up into the foothills, although they transition to coniferous (pine and spruce) forests in the higher elevations (with aspen and birch being found in the coulees). The hilltops and southern faces of the hills are often only covered with scrub and wiry shrubs.

Fauna

The ever-present Lakelands deer are found across the South Davendowns, with moose frequenting the ponds and rivers and elk being found in the foothills. Small game (rabbit, pheasant, and grouse) is also quite common, and beavers (both normal and giant) are common in the Wanderwater watershed. Wolf packs hunt the hills and forests, and mountain lions and bears (black and grizzly) are also encountered in the region.

There are confirmed green dragon encounters (most common along the base of the hills) in this region, as well as owlbears, trolls, and needlemen (in the coniferous forests in the hills).

Land Use

The Southwest Davendowns are a wilderness region, far enough away from any established communities that the region is not even used by hunters or woodcutters.

Inhabitants

There are no human inhabitants (other than stray druids and adventurers). There have been encounters with gnolls in the area, as well as bands of well-armed and armored ogres in the hills. These ogres hunt across the hills, but steadfastly avoid the Grey Tower. In the valley forests, bugbears hunt and occasionally skirmish with the gnolls, while the coniferous forests of the hills are claimed by needlemen (who often clash with the ogres). Trolls are not uncommon in the area, although they rarely travel far afield.

Communities and Economy

There are no established communities in the South Davendowns region.

Features of Note

Grey Tower - this tower has no windows, no doors, or roof entry. It is made of grey stone. Needless to say, it is a magnet for adventurers. Several bands have tried to force their way in by use of axe and hammer (unsuccessfully, for the damage is undone at sunset and sunrise). Other bands have forced their way inside through the use of magic (like the *Passwall* spell). What, if anything, they found is unknown – none of these bands ever returned.

The Tower Wood - a 220-acre copse of about 200 ancient oaks; these trees are massive, each 4 to 6 times larger than an oak would be expected to grow. Each stands about 400' tall, with a trunk diameter of 45 to 60' at ground level. The canopy covers an area of over 5,000 square yards (120' radius), and the trees are spaced between 150 and 200 feet apart. The canopy starts 60' overhead, making for a large, shady, cathedral-like environment. Many elves and druids come to the Tower Wood as a pilgrimage, and various monsters (including giant spiders and ettercaps, stirges, and green dragons) have been known to lair here. No one is quite sure why these trees have grown so large (and there are rumors that a massive and ancient treant lives in the area as well).

The Sentinels – The sentinels are two huge "guards" carved from cliffs flanking the waterfall. The Sentinels are 50' tall statues of armored warriors with swords standing at attention. They are part of the cliffs, not freestanding. Each sentinel conceals an entrance to a watch fortress or tower (there are several rooms carved into the living rock of the cliff, an exit behind the waterfall, etc.). Many adventurers have explored this fortress; some have found monsters and treasure, while some have found nothing. One never knows what will take up occupancy in the Sentinels. It is known that the Sentinels also guard an entrance to deeper caves (a massive iron door, torn from its hinges and cast aside). Those adventurers that have descended past the iron door have never been heard from again.

River Watch – once a fortress that watched over the confluence of the Watch, the Moon and the Birchwynd Creeks, this ruin is occasionally occupied by bugbears, bandits, trolls or other creatures. Adventurers often stop by here, looking for monsters and treasure. Everyone assumes that there must be some type of dungeon or cellars for this ruin, but no one has found (or admits to having found) them.

Moon Lake – This lake is a sacred pool (to some elves, at least one order of druids, and the church of the Moon Mother). On a clear, windless night when the water is still, one can see a "reflection" of a tower in the water. On a full moon one can pass through the reflection to the tower, as one can on the new moon. The church of the Moon Mother and the elves agree that the "towers" are mirror images, one good and one evil. What, if anything, resides in those towers is unknown, as the druids seem to discourage exploration of the lake on these nights (or, perhaps, they seek to keep something from coming out of the lake).

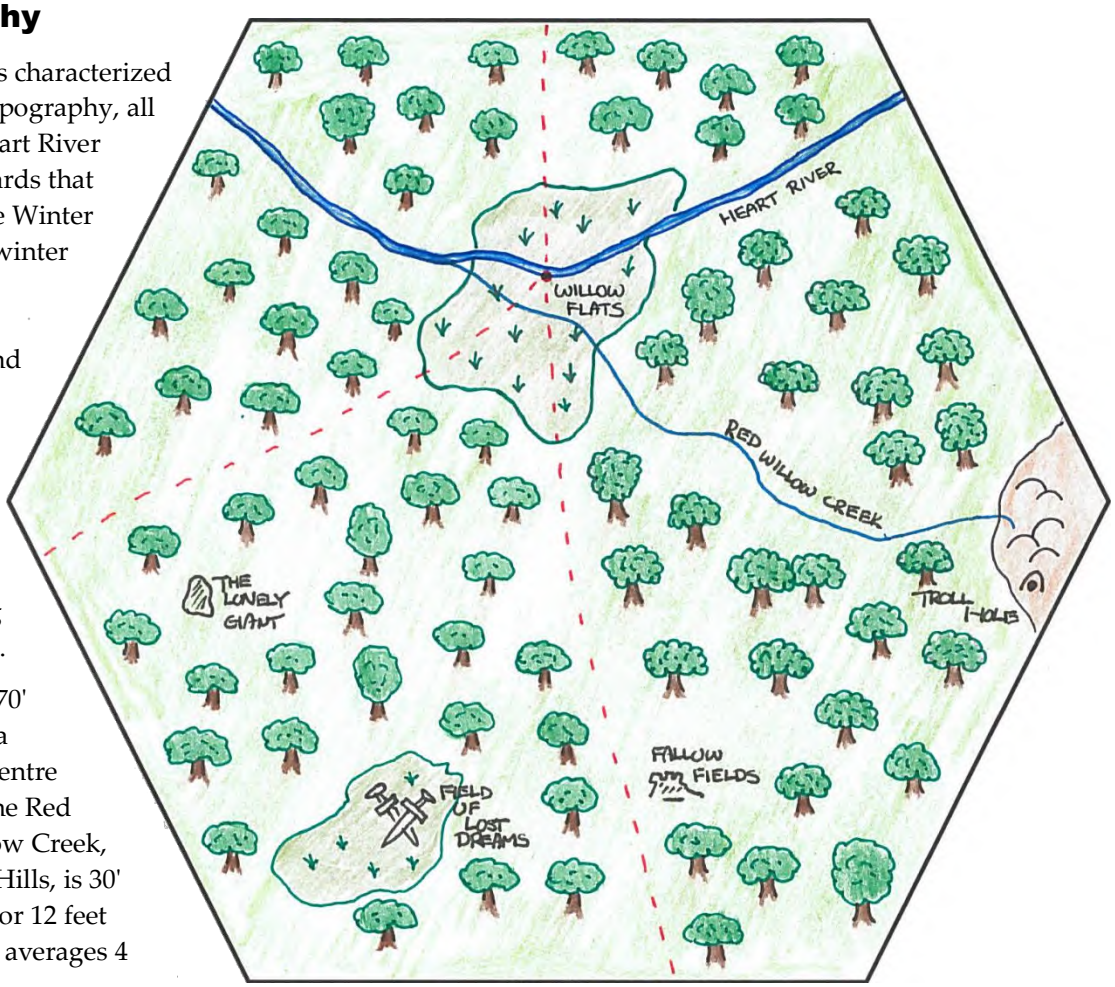
Willow Flats Region

Climate

Temperate, with deep snows in the winter, rains in the late spring and early summer and a dry autumn. The northern forests are 2,900 to 2,800 feet above sea level (gently grading from east to west and south to north), while the hills on the eastern boundary of the region are 3,500 feet above sea level.

Terrain/Topography

The Willow Flats region is characterized by a gently undulating topography, all of which is part of the Heart River watershed, draining towards that river. A small sliver of the Winter Hills (so named because winter "comes down from the hills"), the foothills between the Lakelands and the Southwall Mountain range intrude into the eastern edge of this region. These hills are gentle knob & kettle terrain here, but become strongly to steeply rolling hills to the east and south.



The Heart River is about 70' wide in this region, with a depth of 15' to 20' in the centre (deeper downstream of the Red Willow Creek). Red Willow Creek, flowing from the Winter Hills, is 30' wide at its widest and 10 or 12 feet deep in spots, although it averages 4 to 7 feet deep.

Flora

The Willow Flats region is forested, primarily hardwood forests comprised of oak, aspen, and maple. Some birch and willow can be found along watercourses and ponds. The Winter Hills have birch and willow in the low areas, and stunted aspen and thorn-cotton shrubs on the exposed tops. A few conifers are found in the higher regions of the hills.

The town of Willow Flats is situated in the middle of a large meadow; this meadow, much like the meadow known as the Field of Lost Dreams, is man-made, the result of axe, plow and fire. Most of this meadow is grass or cultivated fields (at least around Willow Flats).

Fauna

Deer are the most common large fauna in the region, although elk and bison occasionally come down from the hills, and wild boar are occasionally found rooting through the underbrush. Bears are not uncommon (primarily little black bears in the forests, and some grizzlies in the mountains). The primary predators are wolf packs; however, they have been hunted out close to Willow Flats.

Land Use

With the exception of agriculture in the immediate vicinity of Willow Flats, the region is mostly wilderness. A well-traveled road runs north and south from Willow Flats, connecting the town to Long Hill and Sedge's Crossing. The West Road (leading to Raven's Hollow) sees less traffic, but it is still well traveled enough that it is in good condition. There is some logging and hunting in the forests, but little livestock is grazed far from the village.

Inhabitants

Other than the human inhabitants of Willow Flats there seem to be no other organized races or communities. Occasionally a pack of trolls will cause problems, gnolls and ogres have wandered through, and elven hunting parties will be encountered (far from the Elven Courts), but a traveler is more likely to encounter nothing but wild animals.

Communities and Economy

Willow Flats (population 1,100) is located on the south bank of the Heart River; a ferry connects the village to the road that leads north to Sedge's Crossing. The ferry is large enough to carry either a wagon or draft animals, not both at the same time. The economy is agriculturally based, although there is little surplus shipped out of the region.

Features of Note

The Troll Hole - a nasty cave that seems to constantly be home to trolls, despite the fact that it has been burned out repeatedly. The trolls become a problem every decade or so, necessitating the hiring of adventurers to put them all to the blade. The fact that the trolls keep coming back has led to rumors that the caves hold some significance to the trolls (a holy spot, perhaps), or that a larger pack of trolls lives to the east or south in the Winter Hills or Southwall Mountains. A few experienced adventurers have noted that the caves are quite deep, and suspect that there are connections to subterranean realms, or perhaps a deepspawn lair.

The Fallow Fields – a small community (known as Goodhaven) that was wiped out by trolls 3 generations back. The fields have been reclaimed by the forests (almost all aspen). Adventurers have picked over the ruins (all that is left are foundations), and found little other than vermin. However, the place feels wrong, and travelers tend to hurry past.

The Lonely Giant – this massive rock (about 30' high, 110' long and 70' wide) sits by itself in a clearing. The rock is a type that is not normally found here (but can be found on the other side of the Southwall Mountains range). It's simply a glacial erratic. Or is it? Regardless, it is not unusual to find a druid camped here, sitting on top of the rock, just enjoying the view.

Field of Lost Dreams – this is an old battlefield, old even before the village of Willow Flats was founded. Despite its age, and the fact that it is grown over with grasses and short shrubs (nothing over 3' tall), there are still exposed skeletons clad in rusted armor. The remains should have decayed long ago, which leads everyone to believe something supernatural is going on. Adventurers have scoured the field, looking for magic, treasure or monsters. Most have found nothing (a few never returned). There is a conflicting rumor that the army will rise when called by a leader to either save the Lakelands or conquer it.

Staff of Unison

This staff is comprised of strips of different wood held together with iron bands along its length. The staff is a +1 weapon, and in the possession of a cleric it has the ability, for the cost of 1 charge, to channel the strength of the cleric's allies to increase their power for one strike.

The staff may channel the strength of 1 person per level of cleric using the staff. For each person added to the group, the cleric will have an overall "to hit" and "to damage" bonus equal to the combined "to hit" and "to damage" bonuses of all channeled (including herself). Those with no strength to hit or damage bonuses will give only a flat +1 to damage. The person's channeled must be within 30' of the wielder.

For example, a 7th level cleric with a staff of unison and a strength of 12 channels the strength of 7 party members, 4 of whom have strength bonuses (+1/+1+1/+1+2/+2+3) and 3 of whom do not (+1/+1/+1), and adding the cleric's bonus and the bonus for the weapon itself (+1/+1+1) for a total of +6 to hit and +11 damage.

GP value 18,000; XP value 3000

by Ian Slater

For Further Reading

This issue's column is all about Animal Companions

For something different … this month's first entry is an adventure:

The Frugal GM's Mad Bat adventure: https://www.patreon.com/posts/1765819

Most of this month's entries are blog posts:

Delta on Animal Growth: http://deltasdnd.blogspot.com/2014/09/spells-through-ages-animal-growth.html

Delta on Grown Animals: http://deltasdnd.blogspot.com/2014/09/growing-animals.html

Delta on Animal Carrying Capacity: http://deltasdnd.blogspot.com/2017/05/oed-wilderness-rules-draft-carrying.html

Smoldering Wizard's Warden Class and their Animal Companion rules: https://smolderingwizard.com/2014/02/13/updated-warden-class-for-labyrinth-lord/

Albino Blood Leech as animal companion: http://talesofagm.com/?p=1135#sthash.10oPNUiE.dpuf

Druids using animal forms and companions: https://merricb.com/2014/04/11/playing-an-add-druid/

Animal companions the only survivors vs. a green dragon: http://www.dndadventure.com/html/articles/gaming_stories.html

Rangers and animal companions: http://www.tribality.com/2015/09/24/the-ranger-class-part-two/

Robin Hood and his animal companion?: http://celticpunkin.blogspot.com/2014/08/is-robin-hood-ranger.html

Bear companion as mount: http://www.thebradking.com/2013/12/31/entry-8-bic-and-the-bear/

But we have some forum threads:

Druid class with animal companion rules: https://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=15&t=77559

Mundane Animal Friends: https://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=73351

And videos:

Roleplaying animal companions (*Nerdarchy* video): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-bz3-mujHw

Great GM using animal companions to improve your game: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7unHj7yAtQ

Finally, some articles from our favorite source, *Dragon Magazine*:

"A Collection of Canines" by Stephen Inniss, Issue 102, page 20

"Trained Animals in Dungeons & Dragons" by Robert Greayer, Issue 29, page 38

"Greater Familiars of Faerun" (2E) by Jean Rabe, Issue 228, page 76

"Animal Henchman" (2E) by James Wyatt, Issue 269, page 26

& Magazine on the Net

The *& Publishing Group* is active in these venues:

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Google+: https://plus.google.com/u/0/b/117421612009560237481/117421612009560237481/posts

Twitter: @andmagPublishin

Tumblr: http://www.tumblr.com/blog/and-mag

Fans can get news of upcoming & publications at all of these, plus even more places:

We have two dedicated forums where we post news! We appreciate it when readers provide us with feedback!

Unseen Servant:

http://www.unseenservant.us/forum/viewforum.php?f=309

OSRGaming:

http://osrgaming.org/forums/viewforum.php?f=110

We also have a feedback thread on Dragonsfoot where we post news and receive feedback from readers.

http://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=56145

Dragonsfoot also has a thread dedicated to posting news regarding Non-Dragonsfoot Publications. Look here for news regarding our publications.

https://www.dragonsfoot.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=26003

And you can find *&* news in a variety of other places!

FirstEditonDND Yahoo Group

http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/FirstEditonDND/

Pen & Paper Games

http://www.penandpapergames.com/forums/showthread.php/23274-New-old-school-D-amp-D-magazine-free?p=181105

RPG.NET

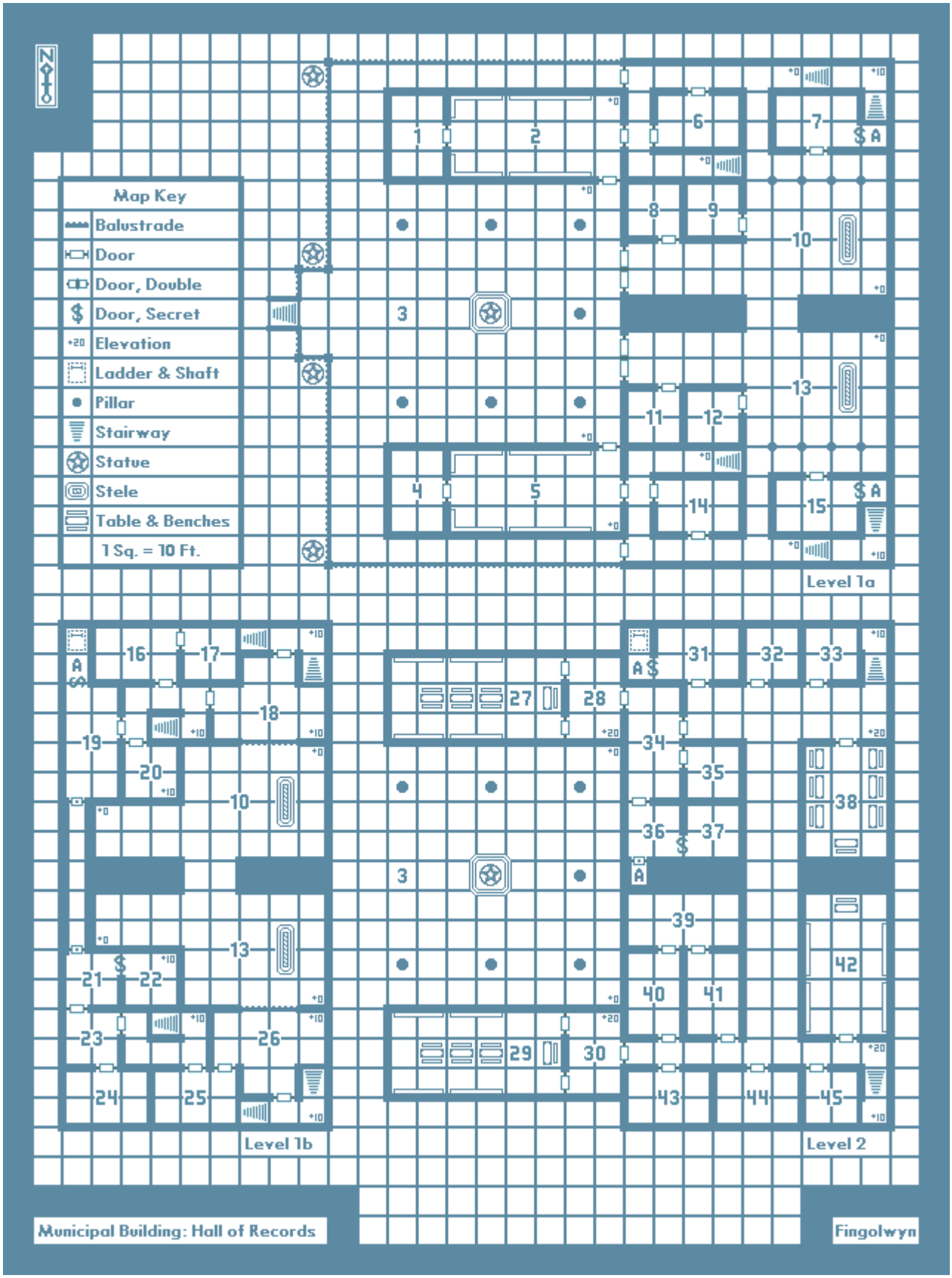
http://forum.rpg.net/showthread.php?638167-New-old-school-D-amp-D-mag-f

USENET

rec.games.frp.dnd alt.games.adndfe rec.games.frp.misc

Map 2: Records Hall

by M. W. Poort (AKA Fingolwyn)



Each issue of **&** has a theme, and our goal is to ensure that at least 60% of the articles match that theme.

Why?

To give our readers as much of a good thing as we can!

Themes for upcoming issues include:

- Dragons
- Fighters
- Villages and Hamlets
- Mythologies and Deities

What do YOU want to read?

Our readers should help decide what they read. Send your ideas for themes to: letters@and-mag.com

But ... ideas are only half the picture! We need to fill in the other half, the articles! Do your part to keep **&** full of interesting things. Send your articles, monsters, spells, items, and anything else you can think of to: submissions@and-mag.com

Stay tuned for **&** Issue #15:

Not Demons Nor Devils

Coming in May 2018!

This issue may include:

Hags of Hades

Daemon Politics

The Corroding Plinth

The Maleficent Mature

Coming in August 2018, Issue # 16:

Dragons

This issue may include:

Dragon Damage Revisited

So Your Dragon Uses Spells?

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